Isaac Taylor del. et sculp.

Published as the Act directs 1.st June 1778, by T. Cadell in the Strand.

Isaac Taylor del. et sculp.

Published as the Act directs 1.st June 1778, by T. Cadell in the Strand.

THE

HISTORY

OF

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON;

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS.

BY Mr. SAMUEL RICHARDSON,

AUTHOR OF PAMELA AND CLARISSA.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE EIGHTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. LONGMAN, J. JOHNSON, G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, R. BALDWIN, J. NICHOLS, S. BLADON, W. RICHARDSON, W. LANE, W. LOWNDES, G. AND T. WILKIE, P. MC. QUEEN, C. D. FIGUENIT, CADELL AND DAVIES, AND S. BAGSTER.

MDCCXCVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

THE Editor of the following Letters takes Leave to obſerve, that he has now, in this Publication, completed the Plan, that was the Object of his Wiſhes, rather than of his Hopes, to accompliſh.

The firſt Collection which he publiſhed, intituled PAMELA, exhibited the Beauty and Superiority of Virtue in an innocent and unpoliſhed Mind, with the Reward which often, even in this Life, a protecting Providence beſtows on Goodneſs. A young Woman of low Degree, relating to her honeſt Parents the ſevere Trials ſhe met with from a Maſter who ought to have been the Protector not the Aſſailer, of her Honour, ſhews the Character of a Libertine in its truly contemptible Light. This Libertine, however, from the Foundation of good Principles laid in his early Years by an excellent Mother; by his Paſſion for a virtuous young Woman; and by her amiable Example, and unwearied Patience, when ſhe became his Wife; is, after a Length of Time, perfectly reclaimed.

The ſecond Collection, publiſhed under the Title of CLARISSA, diſplayed a more melancholy Scene. A young Lady of higher Fortune, and born to happier Hopes, is ſeen involved in ſuch Variety of deep Diſtreſſes, as lead her to an untimely Death; affording a Warning to Parents againſt forcing the Inclinations of their Children in the moſt important Article of their Lives; and to Children againſt hoping too far from the faireſt Aſſurances of a Man void of Principle. The Heroine, however, as a truly *Chriſtian Heroine*, proves ſuperior to her Trials; and her Heart, always excellent, refined and exalted by every one of them, rejoices in the Approach of a happy Eternity. Her cruel Deſtroyer appears wretched and diſappointed, even in the boaſted Succeſs of his vile Machinations: But ſtill (buoyed up with Self-conceit and vain Preſumption) he goes on, after every ſhort Fit of imperfect, yet terrifying Conviction, hardening himſelf more and more; till, unreclaimed by the moſt affecting Warnings, and repeated Admonitions, he periſhes miſerably in the Bloom of Life, and ſinks into the Grave oppreſſed with guilt, Remorſe, and Horror. His Letters, it is hoped, afford many uſeful Leſſons to the gay Part of Mankind againſt that Miſuſe of Wit and Youth, of Rank

and

and Fortune, and of every outward Accompliſhment, which turns them into a Curſe to the miſerable Poſſeſſor, as well as to all around him.

Here the Editor apprehended he ſhould be obliged to ſtop, by reaſon of his precarious State of Health, and a Variety of Avocations which claimed his firſt Attention: But it was inſiſted on by ſeveral of his Friends, who were well aſſured he had the Materials in his Power, that he ſhould produce into Public View the Character and Actions of a Man of TRUE HONOUR.

He has been enabled to obey theſe his Friends, and to complete his firſt Deſign: And now, therefore, preſents to the Public, in Sir CHARLES GRANDISON, the Example of a Man acting uniformly well thro' a Variety of trying Scenes, becauſe all his Actions are regulated by one ſteady Principle: A man of Religion and Virtue; of Livelineſs and Spirit; accompliſhed and agreeable; happy in himſelf, and a Bleſſing to others.

From what has been premiſed, it may be ſuppoſed, that the preſent Collection is not publiſhed ultimately, nor even principally, any more than the other two, for the Sake of Entertainment only. A much nobler End is

in

in View. Yet it is hoped the Variety of Characters and Converſations neceſſarily introduced into ſo large a Correſpondence as theſe Volumes contain, will enliven as well as inſtruct: The rather, as the principal Correſpondents are young Ladies of polite Education, and of lively Spirits.

The Nature of Familiar Letters, written, as it were, to the *Moment*, while the Heart is agitated by Hopes and Fears, on Events undecided, muſt plead an Excuſe for the Bulk of a Collection of this Kind. Mere Facts and Characters might be compriſed in a much ſmaller Compaſs: But, would they be equally intereſting? It happens fortunately, that an Account of the juvenile Years of the Principal Perſon is narratively given in ſome of the Letters. As many, however, as could be ſpared, have been omitted. There is not one Epiſode in the Whole; nor, after Sir CHARLES GRANDISON is introduced, one Letter inſerted but what tends to illuſtrate the principal Deſign. Thoſe which precede his Introduction, will not, it is hoped, be judged unneceſſary on the whole, as they tend to make the Reader acquainted with Perſons, the Hiſtory of moſt of whom is cloſely interwoven with that of Sir Charles.

SON-

SONNET.

SWEET Moraliſt, whoſe generous Labors tend,
With ceaſeleſs diligence, to guide the Mind,
In the wild maze of error wandering blind,
To Virtue, Truth, and Honor, glorious end

Of glorious toils! Vainly would I commend,
In numbers worthy of your ſenſe refin'd,
This laſt Great Work, which leaves all praiſe behind,
And juſtly ſtyles you of Mankind the Friend:

Pleaſure with Profit artful while you blend,
And now the Fancy, now the Judgment feed
With grateful change, which every paſſion ſways,
Numbers, who ne'er to graver Lore attend,
Caught by the charm, grow virtuous as they read;
And Lives reform'd ſhall give you genuine praiſe.

T. E.

Names of the Principal Perſons.

MEN.

George Selby, *Eſq.*
John Greville, *Eſq.*
Richard Fenwick, *Eſq.*
Robert Orme, *Eſq.*
Archibald Reeves, *Eſq.*
Sir Rowland Meredith, *Knt.*
James Fowler, *Eſq.*
Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, *Bart.*
The Earl of L. *a Scottiſh Nobleman.*
Thomas Deane, *Eſq.*
Sir CHARLES GRANDISON, *Bart.*
James Bagenhall, *Eſq.*
Mr. Solomon Merceda.
John Jordan, *Eſq.*
Sir Harry Beauchamp, *Bart.*
Edward Beauchamp, *Eſq. his Son.*
Everard Grandiſon, *Eſq.*
The Rev. Dr. Bartlett.
Lord W. *Uncle to Sir* Charles Grandiſon.
Lord G. *Son of the Earl of* G.

WOMEN.

Miſs Harriet Byron.
Mrs. Shirley, *her Grandmother, by the Mother's ſide.*
Mrs. Selby, *Siſter to Miſs* Byron's *Father, and Wife of Mr.* Selby.
Miſs Lucy } Selby, *Nieces*
Miſs Nancy } *to Mr.* Selby.
Miſs Orme, *Siſter of Mr.* Orme.
Mrs. Reeves, *Wife of Mr.* Reeves, *Couſin of Miſs* Byron.
Lady Betty Williams.
The Counteſs of L. *Wife of Lord* L. *eldeſt Siſter of Sir* Charles Grandiſon.
Miſs Grandiſon, *younger Siſter of Sir* Charles.
Mrs. Eleanor Grandiſon, *Aunt to Sir* Charles.
Miſs Emily Jervois, *his Ward.*
Lady Mansfield.
Lady Beauchamp.
The Counteſs Dowager of D.
Mrs. Hortenſia Beaumont.

ITALIANS.

Marcheſe della Porretta, *the Father.*
Marcheſe della Porretta, *his eldeſt Son.*
The Biſhop of Nocera, *his ſecond Son.*
Signor Jeronymo *della* Porretta, *third Son.*
Conte della Porretta, *their Uncle.*
Count of Belvedere.
Father Mareſcotti.
Marcheſa della Porretta.
Signora Clementina, *her Daughter.*
Signora Juliana Sforza, *Siſter to the Marcheſe della* Porretta.
Signora Laurana, *her Daughter.*
Signora Olivia.
Camilla, *Lady* Clementina's *Governeſs.*
Laura, *her Maid.*

THE

HISTORY

OF

SIR CHARLES GRANDISON, BART.

LETTER I.

Miſs LUCY SELBY, *To Miſs* HARRIET BYRON.

Aſhby-Canons, January 10.

YOUR reſolution to accompany Mrs. Reeves to London, has greatly alarmed your three Lovers: And two of them, at leaſt, will let you know that it has. Such a lovely girl as my Harriet, muſt expect to be more accountable for her ſteps than one leſs excellent and leſs attractive.

Mr. Greville, in his uſual reſolute way, threatens to follow you to London; and there, he ſays, he will watch the motions of every man who approaches you; and, if he find reaſon for it, will *early* let ſuch man know *his* pretenſions, and the danger he may run into, if he pretend to be his competitor. But let me not do him injuſtice; though he talks of a rival thus harſhly, he ſpeaks of you more highly than man

ever ſpoke of woman. Angel and Goddeſs are phraſes you have been uſed to from him; and tho' ſpoken in his humourous way, yet I am ſure he moſt ſincerely admires you.

Mr. Fenwick, in a leſs determined manner, declares, that he will follow you to town, if you ſtay there above *one* fortnight.

The gentle Orme ſighs his apprehenſions, and wiſhes you would change your purpoſe. Tho' hopeleſs, he ſays, it is ſome pleaſure to him that he can think himſelf in the ſame county with you; and much more, that he can tread in your footſteps to and from church every Sunday, and behold you there. He wonders how your Grandmamma, your Aunt, your Uncle, can ſpare you. Your Couſin Reeves's ſurely, he ſays, are very happy in their influences over us all.

Each of the gentlemen is afraid, that by increaſing the number of your admirers, you will increaſe his difficulties: But what is that to them, I aſked, when they already know, that you are not inclined to favour any of the three?

If you hold your reſolution, and my Couſin Reeves's their time of ſetting out, pray let me know, and I will attend you at my Uncle Selby's, to wiſh you a good journey, much pleaſure in town, and a return with a ſafe and ſound heart My Siſter, who, poor dear girl, continues extremely weak and low, will ſpare me for a purpoſe ſo indiſpenſable. I will not have you come to *us*. I know it would grieve you to ſee her in the way ſhe is in. You too much take to heart the infirmities of your friends which you cannot cure; and as your Grandmamma lives upon your ſmiles, and you rejoice all your friends by your chearfulneſs, it would be cruel to make you ſad.

* * *

Mr. Greville has juſt left us. He dropt in upon us as we were going to dinner. My Grandmother Selby you know is always pleaſed with his rattling.

She

She prevailed on him to alight, and ſit down with us. All his talk was of you. He repeated his former *threatenings* (as I called them to him) on your going to town. After dinner, he read us a letter from Lady Frampton relating to you. He read us alſo ſome paſſages from the copy of his anſwer, with deſign, I believe, that I ſhould aſk him to leave it behind him. He is a vain creature, you know, and ſeemed fond of what he had written. I *did* aſk him. He pretended to make a ſcruple of *your* ſeeing it; but it was a faint one. However, he called for pen and ink; and when it was brought him, ſcratched over two paſſages, and that with ſo many little flouriſhes (as you will ſee) that he thought they could not be read. But the ink I furniſhed him with, happening to be paler than his, you will find he was not cunning enough. I promiſed to return it.

Send me a line by the bearer, to tell me if your reſolution holds as to the day.

Adieu, my deareſt Harriet. May Angels protect and guide you whitherſoever you go!

LUCY SELBY.

LETTER II.

Mr. GREVILLE, *To Lady* FRAMPTON.

Incloſed in the preceding.

Northampton, January 6.

YOUR Ladyſhip demands a deſcription of the Perſon of the celebrated Miſs Byron in our neighbourhood; and to know, whether, as report tells you, Love has liſted me in the number of her particular admirers?—*Particular* admirers you well diſtinguiſh; ſince every one who beholds her admires her.

Your Ladyſhip confines your enquiries to her *Perſon*, you tell me; and you own, that women are much more ſolicitous about the beauties of *that*, than of the *Mind*. Perhaps it may be ſo; and that their envy

is much ſooner excited by the one than the other. But who, Madam, can deſcribe the perſon of Miſs Harriet Byron, and her perſon only; animated as every feature is by a mind that beſpeaks all human excellence, and dignifies her in every air, in every look, in every motion?

No man living has a greater paſſion for beauty than I have, Till I knew Miſs Byron, I was one of thoſe who regarded nothing elſe in the Sex. Indeed, I conſidered all intellectual attainments as either uſeleſs or impertinent in women. Your Ladyſhip knows what were my free notions on this head, and has rebuked me for them. A wiſe, a learned lady, I conſidered as a very unnatural character. I wanted women to be all love, and nothing elſe. A *very* little prudence allow'd I to enter into their compoſition; juſt enough to diſtinguiſh the Man of Senſe from the Fool; and that for my *own* ſake. You know I have vanity, Madam: But lovely as Miſs Byron's perſon is, I defy the greateſt Senſualiſt on earth not to admire her mind more than her perſon. What a triumph would the devil have, as I have often thought, when I have ſtood contemplating her perfections, eſpecially at church, were he able to raiſe up a man that could lower this Angel into Woman? —Pardon me!—Your Ladyſhip knows my mad way of ſaying every thing that riſes to my thoughts.

Sweetneſs of temper muſt make plain features glow: What an effect muſt it then have upon fine ones? Never *was* there a ſweeter-tempered woman. Indeed from Sixteen to Twenty, all the Sex (kept in humour by their hopes, and by their attractions) are ſaid to be good-tempered; but ſhe is remarkably ſo. She is juſt turned of Twenty, but looks not more than Seventeen. Her beauty hardly yet in its full blow, will laſt longer, I imagine, than in an earlier bloſſom. Yet the prudence viſible in her whole aſpect, gave her

a diſtinction, even at Twelve, that promiſed what ſhe would be at a riper age.

Yet with all this reigning good-nature viſible in her face and manner, there is ſuch a native dignity in all ſhe ſays, in all ſhe does (tho' mingled with a frankneſs that ſhews her mind's ſuperiority to the minds of almoſt all other women) that it damps and ſuppreſſes, in the moſt audacious, all imaginations of bold familiarity.

I know not, by my ſoul, how ſhe does this neither: Yet ſo it is. She jeſts; ſhe raillies: But I cannot rally her again. Love, it is ſaid, dignifies the adored object. Perhaps it is *that* which awes me.

And now will your Ladyſhip doubt of an affirmative anſwer to your ſecond queſtion, Whether Love has liſted me in the number of her particular admirers?

He has: And the devil take me if I can help myſelf: And yet I have no encouragement—Nor anybody elſe; that's my conſolation. Fenwick is deeper in, if poſſible, than I. We had at our firſt acquaintance, as you have heard, a Tilting-bout on the occaſion: But are ſworn friends now; each having agreed to try his fortune by patience and perſeverance; and being aſſured that the one has no more of her favour to boaſt of, than the other (*a*). "We have indeed "bluſtered away between us half a ſcore more o "her admirers. Poor whining Orme, however, per-"ſeveres. But of him we make no account: He "has a watry head, and tho' he finds a way, by his "Siſter, who viſits at Mr. Selby's, and is much "eſteemed there, to let Miſs Byron know his paſ-"ſion for her, notwithſtanding the negative he has "received; yet doubt we not that ſhe is ſafe from a

(*a*) The paſſages in this letter thus mark'd (") are thoſe which in the preceding one are ſaid to be ſcratch'd out; but yet were legible by holding up the letter to the light.

" flame that he will quench with his tears, before it " can riſe to a head to diſturb us.

" You ladies love men ſhould whine after you: " But never yet did I find, that where a bluſtering " fellow was a competitor, the lady married the " milkſop."

But let me in this particular do Miſs Byron juſtice: How ſhe manages it I cannot tell; but ſhe is courteous to all; nor could ever any man charge her either with pride or cruelty. All I fear, is, that ſhe has ſuch an equality in her temper, that ſhe can hardly find room in her heart for a particular Love: Nor will, till ſhe meets with one whoſe mind is near as faultleſs as her own; and, the general tenor of whoſe life and actions calls upon her diſcretion to give her *leave* to love. " This apprehenſion I owe to a con- " verſation I had with her Grandmother Shirley; " a Lady that is an ornament to old age; and who " hinted to me, that her Grand-daughter had excep- " tions both to Fenwick and me, on the ſcore of a " *few* indulgences that perhaps have been *too* public; " but which all men of faſhion and ſpirit give them- " ſelves, and all women, but *this*, allow of, or hate " not men the worſe for. But then what is her ob- " jection to Orme? He is a ſober dog."

She was but eight years old when her Mother died. She alſo was an excellent woman. Her death was brought on by grief for that of her huſband; which happened but ſix months before—A rare inſtance!

The Grandmother and Aunt, to whom the Girl is dutiful to a proverb, will not interfere with her choice. If *they* are applied to for their intereſt, the anſwer is conſtantly this: The approbation of their Harriet muſt be firſt gained, and then their conſent is ready.

There is a Mr. Deane, a man of an excellent character for a Lawyer; but indeed he left off practice on coming into poſſeſſion of a handſome eſtate. He

was

was the girl's godfather. He is allowed to have great influence over them all. Harriet calls him Papa. To him I have applied: But his anſwer is the very ſame: His *daughter* Harriet muſt chooſe for herſelf: All motions of this kind muſt come firſt from *her*.

And ought *I* to deſpair of ſucceeding with the girl *herſelf?* I, her Greville; not contemptible in perſon; an air—free and eaſy, *at leaſt*; having a good eſtate in poſſeſſion; fine expectances beſides; dreſſing well, ſinging well, dancing well, and bleſt with a moderate ſhare of confidence; which makes *other* women think me a clever fellow: She, a girl of twenty; her fortune between ten and fifteen thouſand pounds only; for her father's conſiderable eſtate, on his demiſe, for want of male heirs, went with the name; her grandmother's jointure not more than 500l. a-year.—And what though her uncle Selby has no children, and loves her, yet has he nephews and nieces of his own, whom he alſo loves; for this Harriet is his wife's niece.

I will not *deſpair*. If reſolution, if perſeverance will do, and if ſhe be a woman, ſhe ſhall be mine—And ſo I have told her aunt Selby, and her uncle too; and ſo I have told Miſs Lucy Selby, her couſin, as ſhe calls her, who is highly and deſervedly in her favour; and ſo indeed have I more than once told the girl herſelf.

But now to the deſcription of her perſon—Let me die, if I know where to begin. She is all over lovelineſs. Does not every-body elſe who has ſeen her tell you ſo? Her Stature; ſhall I begin with her ſtature? She cannot be ſaid to be tall; but yet is ſomething above the middling. Her Shape—But what care I for her ſhape? I, who hope to love her ſtill more, tho' poſſeſſion may make me admire her leſs, when ſhe has not that to boaſt of? We young fellows who have been abroad, are above regarding Engliſh ſhapes, and prefer to them the French negligence. By the way, I think the foreign ladies in the right,

that they aim not at what they cannot attain. Whether *we* are ſo much in the right to come into their taſte, is another thing. But be this as it will, there is ſo much eaſe and dignity in the perſon, in the dreſs, and in every air and motion, of Miſs Harriet Byron, that fine ſhapes will ever be in faſhion where ſhe is, be either native or foreigner the judge.

Her Complexion is admirably fair and clear. I have ſat admiring her complexion, till I have imagined I have ſeen the life-blood flowing with equal courſe thro' her tranſlucent veins.

Her Forehead, ſo nobly free and open, ſhews dignity and modeſty, and ſtrikes into one a kind of *awe*, ſingly contemplated, that (from the *delight* which accompanies the *awe*) I know not how to deſcribe. Every ſingle feature, in ſhort, will bear the niceſt examination; and her whole Face, and her Neck, ſo admirably ſet on her finely-proportioned Shoulders—let me periſh, if, taking her all together, I do not hold her to be the moſt unexceptionable Beauty I ever beheld. But what ſtill is her *particular* excellence, and diſtinguiſhes her from all other *Engliſh* women (for it muſt be acknowleged to be a characteriſtic of the French women of quality) is, the grace which that people call *Phyſiognomy*, and we may call *Expreſſion*: Had *not* her features and her complexion been ſo fine as they are, that grace alone, that Soul ſhining out in her lovely aſpect, joined with the eaſe and gracefulneſs of her motion, would have made her as many admirers as beholders.

After this, ſhall I deſcend to a more particular deſcription?—I will.

Her Cheek—I never *ſaw* a cheek ſo beautifully turned; illuſtrated as it is by a charming Carmine fluſh, which denotes ſound Health. A moſt bewitching dimple takes place in each when ſhe ſmiles; and ſhe has ſo much reaſon to be pleaſed with herſelf, and with all about her (for ſhe is the idol of her relations)

tions) that I believe from infancy ſhe never frowned; nor can a frown, it is my opinion, ſit upon her face for a minute. Would to Heaven I were conſiderable enough with her to prove the contrary!

Her Mouth—There never *was* ſo lovely a mouth. But no wonder; ſince ſuch roſy lips, and ſuch ivory and even teeth, muſt give beauty to a mouth leſs charming than hers.

Her Noſe adds dignity to her other features. Her Chin is ſweetly turn'd, and almoſt imperceptibly dimpled.

Her Eyes;—Ay, Madam, her Eyes!—Good Heaven! what a luſtre; yet not a fierce, but a mild luſtre! How have I deſpiſed the romancing Poets for their unnatural deſcriptions of the eyes of their heroines! But I have thought thoſe deſcriptions, tho' abſurd enough in conſcience, leſs abſurd (allowing ſomething for poetical licence) ever ſince I beheld thoſe of Miſs Harriet Byron.

Her Hair is a real and unlaboured ornament to her. All natural its curls: Art has no ſhare in the luſtre it gives to her other beauties.

I mentioned her Neck—Here I dare not truſt myſelf—Inimitable creature! All-attracting loveline ſs.

Her Arm—Your Ladyſhip knows my paſſion for a delicate Arm. By my Soul, Madam, your own does not exceed it.

Her Hands are extremely fine. Such Fingers! And they accuſtomed to the Pen, to the Needle, to the Harpſichord; excelling in all—O Madam; women *have* Souls. I now am convinced they have. I dare own to your Ladyſhip, that once I doubted it, on a ſuppoſition that they were given us for temporary purpoſes only. And have I not ſeen her dance! Have I not heard her ſing! But indeed, mind and perſon, ſhe is all harmony.

Then for Reading, for acquired Knowlege, what y ſo young—But you know the character of her andfather Shirley. He was a man of univerſal

learning, and, from his public employments abroad, as polite as learned. This Girl, from Seven years of age, when he came to ſettle in England, to Fourteen, when ſhe loſt him, was his delight; and her education and inſtruction the amuſement of his vacant hours. This is the period, he uſed to ſay, in which the foundations of all female goodneſs are to be laid, ſince ſo ſoon after Fourteen they leap into women. The dead languages he aimed not to teach her; leſt he ſhould overload her young mind: But in the Italian and French he made her an adept.

Nor were the advantages common ones which ſhe received from his Lady, her Grandmother, and from her Aunt Selby, her Father's Siſter, a woman of equal worthineſs. Her Grandmother particularly is one of the moſt pious, yet moſt chearful, of women. She will not permit her Daughter Byron, ſhe ſays, to live with her, for *both* their ſakes. For the *Girl's* ſake, becauſe there is a greater reſort of company at Mr. Selby's, than at Shirley Manor; and ſhe is afraid, as her Grandchild has a ſerious turn, that *her* own contemplative life may make her more grave than ſhe wiſhes ſo young a woman to be. Youth, ſhe ſays, is the ſeaſon for chearfulneſs. For *her own* ſake, becauſe ſhe looks upon her Harriet's company as a cordial too rich to be always at hand; and when ſhe has a mind to regale, ſhe will either ſend for her, fetch her, or viſit her at Mrs. Selby's. One of her letters to Mrs. Selby I once ſaw. It ran thus—"You muſt ſpare me my "Harriet. I am in pain. My ſpirits are not high. "I would not have the undecay'd mind yield, for "want of uſing the means, to the decaying body. "*One* happy day with our child, the true child of the "united minds of her late excellent parents, will, I "hope, effect the cure: If it do not, you muſt ſpare "her to me *two*."

Did I not tell you, Madam, that it was very difficult to deſcribe the Perſon *only* of this admirable young lady.

lady. But I ſtop here. A horrid apprehenſion comes acroſs me! How do I know but I am praiſing another man's *future* wife, and not my own? Here is a Couſin of hers, a Mrs. Reeves, a fine Lady from London, come down under the curſed influence of my evil ſtars, to carry this Harriet away with her into the gay world. Woman! Woman!—I beg your Ladyſhip's pardon; but what Angel of Twenty is proof againſt vanity? The firſt hour ſhe appears, ſhe will be a Toaſt; Stars and Titles will croud about her; and who knows how far a paltry coronet may dazzle *her* who deſerves an imperial crown? But, woe to the man, whoever he be, whoſe pretenſions dare to interfere (and have any aſſurance of ſucceſs) with thoſe of

Your Ladyſhip's
Moſt obedient and faithful Servant,
JOHN GREVILLE.

LETTER III.

Miſs HARRIET BYRON, *To Miſs* LUCY SELBY.

Selby-Houſe, Jan. 16.

I Return you incloſed, my Lucy, Mr. Greville's ſtrange letter. As you aſked him for it, he will have no doubt but you ſhewed it to me. It is better therefore, if he make enquiry whether you did or not, to own it. In this caſe he will be curious to know my ſentiments upon it. He is ſenſible that my whole heart is open to you.

Tell him, if you think proper, in ſo many words, that I am far more diſpleaſed with him for his impetuoſity, than gratified by his flattery.

Tell him, that I think it very hard, that, when my neareſt relations leave me ſo generouſly to my liberty, a man to whom I never gave cauſe to treat me with diſreſpect, ſhould take upon himſelf to threaten and controul me.

Aſk him, What are his pretences for following me to London, or elſewhere?

If I had not had reaſons *before* to avoid a more than neighbourly civility to him, he has now furniſhed me with very ſtrong ones. The threatening Lover muſt certainly make a tyrant huſband. Don't you think ſo, Lucy? But make not ſuppoſals of Lover or Huſband to him: Theſe bold men will turn ſhadows into ſubſtance in their own favour.

A woman who is ſo much exalted above what ſhe *can* deſerve, has reaſon to be terrified, were ſhe to marry the complimenter (even *could* ſhe ſuppoſe him ſo blinded by his paſſion as not to be abſolutely inſincere) to think of the height ſhe muſt fall from in his opinion, when ſhe has put it into his power to treat her but as what ſhe is.

Indeed I both *deſpiſe* and *fear* a very high complimenter.—*Deſpiſe* him for his deſigning flattery, ſuppoſing him not to believe himſelf; or, if he *mean* what he ſays, for his injudiciouſneſs. I *fear* him, leſt he ſhould (as in the former caſe he muſt hope) be able to raiſe a vanity in me, that would ſink me beneath his meanneſs, and give him cauſe to triumph over my folly, at the very time that I am full of my own wiſdom.

High-ſtrain'd compliments, in ſhort, always pull me down; always make me ſhrink into *myſelf*. Have not ſome vanity to guard againſt? I have no doubt but Mr. Greville wiſhed I ſhould ſee this letter: And this gives me ſome little indignation againſt *myſelf*; for does it not look as if, from ſome faults in my conduct, Mr. Greville had formed hopes of ſucceeding by treating me like a fool?

I hope theſe gentlemen will not follow me to town, as they threaten. If they do, I will not ſee them, if I can any way avoid it. Yet, for me to appear to *them* ſolicitous on this head, or to deſire them *not* to go, will be in ſome meaſure to lay myſelf under an obliga-

obligation to their acquieſcence. It is not therefore for me to hope to influence them in this matter, ſince they expect too much in return for it from me; and ſince they will be ready to found a merit in their paſſion even for diſobliging me.

I cannot bear, however, to think of their dangling after me where-ever I go. Theſe men, my dear, were we to give them importance with us, would be greater infringers of our natural freedom than the moſt ſevere parents; and for *their own ſakes:* Whereas Parents, if ever ſo deſpotic (if not unnatural ones indeed) mean *ſolely our good*, tho' headſtrong girls do not always think ſo. Yet ſuch, even *ſuch* can be teazed out of their wills, at leaſt out of their duty, by the men who ſtile themſelves *Lovers*, when they are invincible to all the entreaties and commands of their *Parents*.

O that the next eight or ten years of my life, if I find not in the interim a man on whom my whole undivided heart can fix, were happily over! *As* happily as the laſt alike important four years! To be able to look down from the *elevation* of thirty years, my principles fix'd, and to have no capital folly to reproach myſelf with, what a happineſs would that be!

My Couſin Reeves's time of ſetting out holds; the indulgence of my deareſt friends continues; and my reſolution holds. But I will ſee my Nancy before I ſet out. What! ſhall I enter upon a party of pleaſure, and leave in my heart room to reflect, in the midſt of it, that there is a dear ſuffering friend who had reaſon to think I was afraid of giving myſelf pain, when I might, by the balm of true love and friendly ſoothings, adminiſter comfort to her wounded heart?—No, my Lucy, believe me, if I have not generoſity enough, I have *ſelfiſhneſs* enough, to make me avoid a ſting ſo ſevere as *this* would be, to

Your HARRIET BYRON.

LET-

LETTER IV.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Groſvenor-Street, Tueſday, Jan. 24.

WE are juſt arrived. We had a very agreeable journey.

I need not tell you that Mr. Greville and Mr. Fenwick attended us to our firſt baiting; and had a genteel dinner ready provided for us: The gentleman will tell you this, and all particulars.

They both renewed their menaces of following me to London, if I ſtaid above one month. They were ſo good as to ſtretch their fortnight to a month.

Mr. Fenwick, in very pathetic terms, as he found an opportunity to engage me alone for a few minutes, beſought me to *love* him. Mr. Greville was as earneſt with me to declare that I *hated* him. Such a declaration, he ſaid, was all he at preſent wiſhed for. It was ſtrange, he told me, that he neither could prevail on me to encourage his Love, nor to declare my Hatred. He is a whimſical creature.

I raillied him with my uſual freedom; and told him, that if there were one perſon in the world that I was capable of hating, I could make the leſs ſcruple to oblige *him*. He thanked me for that.

The two gentlemen would fain have proceeded farther: But as they are never out of their way, I dare ſay, they would have gone to London; and there have dangled on till we ſhould not have got rid of them, for my whole time of being in town

I was very gravely earneſt with them to leave us, when we ſtept into the coach in order to proceed. Fenwick, you dog, ſaid Mr. Greville, we *muſt* return; Miſs Byron looks grave. Gravity, and a riſing colour in the fineſt face in the world, indicate as much as the frowns of other Beauties. And in the moſt reſpectful manner they both took leave of me; inſiſting,

inſiſting, however, on my hand, and that I would wiſh them well.

I gave each my hand; I wiſh you very well, gentlemen, ſaid I: And I am obliged to your civility in ſeeing me ſo far on my journey: Eſpecially as you are ſo kind as to leave me here.

Why, dear Madam, did you not ſpare your *Eſpecially*, ſaid Mr. Greville?—Come, Fenwick, let us retire, and lay our two loggerheads together, and live over again the paſt hour, and then hang ourſelves.

Poor Mr. Orme! The coach, at our firſt ſetting out, paſſed by his Park-gate, you know. There was he—on the very ridge of the highway. I ſaw him not till it was near him. He bowed to the very ground, with *ſuch* an air of diſconſolateneſs!—Poor Mr. Orme!—I wiſhed to have ſaid one word to him, when we had paſſed him: But the coach flew—Why did the coach fly!—But I waved my hand, and leaned out of the coach as far as I could, and bowed to him.

O Miſs Byron, ſaid Mrs. Reeves (ſo ſaid Mr. Reeves) Mr. Orme is the happy man.

Did I think as you do, I ſhould not be ſo deſirous to have ſpoken to him: But, methinks, I ſhould have been glad to have once ſaid, Adieu, Mr. Orme; for Mr. Orme is a good man.

But, Lucy, my heart was ſoftened at parting with my dear relations and friends; and when the heart is ſoftened, light impreſſions will go deep.

My Couſins' houſe is ſuitable to their fortune: Very handſome, and furniſh'd in taſte. Mrs. Reeves, knowing well what a ſcribbler I am, and am expected to be, has provided me with pen, ink, and paper, in abundance. She readily allowed me to take early poſſeſſion of my apartment, that I might pay punctual obedience to the commands of all my friends on ſetting out. Theſe, you know, were, to write in the firſt hour of my arrival: And it was allowed to be to

you,

you, my dear. But, writing thus early, what can have occurred?

My apartment is extremely elegant. A well-furniſhed book-caſe, is, however, to me the moſt attracting ornament in it—Pardon me, dear Pen and Ink! I muſt not prefer any-thing to you, by whoſe means I hope to ſpend ſome part of every day at Selby-houſe; and even at this diſtance amuſe with my prattle thoſe friends that are always ſo partial to it.

And now, my dear, my revered Grandmamma, I aſk your bleſſing—Yours, my ever-indulgent Aunt Selby—And yours, my honoured and equally beloved Uncle Selby. Who knows but you will now in abſence take leſs delight in teazing your ever-dutiful Harriet? But yet I unbeſpeak not my monitor.

Continue to love me, my Lucy, as I ſhall endeavour to deſerve your love: And let me know how our dear Nancy does.

My heart bleeds for her. I ſhould have held myſelf utterly inexcuſable, had I accepted of your kindly intended diſpenſation, and come to town for three whole months, without repeating to her, by word of mouth, my love and my ſympathizing concern for her. What merit does her patience add to her other merits! How has her calamity endeared her to me! If ever I ſhall be heavily afflicted, God give me her amiable, her almoſt meritorious patience in ſufferings!

To my Couſin Holles's, and all my other Relations, Friends, Companions, make the affectionate compliments of

Your HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER V.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Jan. 25.

YOU rejoice me, my dear, in the hopes which, you tell me, Dr. Mitchell from London gives you

you in relation to our Nancy. May our inceſſant prayers for the reſtoration of her health be anſwer'd!

Three things my Aunt Selby, and you, in the name of every one of my friends, injoined me at parting. The *firſt*, To write often, *very* often, were *your* words. This injunction was not needful: My heart is with you; and the good news you give me of my Grandmamma's health, and of our Nancy, enlarges that heart. The *ſecond*, To give you a deſcription of the perſons and characters of the people I am likely to be converſant with in this great town. And, *thirdly*, Beſides the general account which you all expected from me of the viſits I made and received, you injoined me to acquaint you with the very *beginnings* of every addreſs (and even of every *ſilent and reſpectful* diſtinction, were *your* words) that the girl whom you all ſo greatly favour, might receive on this excurſion to town.

Don't you remember what my Uncle Selby anſwer'd to this?—*I* do: And will repeat it, to ſhew, that his correcting cautions ſhall not be forgotten.

The vanity of the Sex, ſaid he, will not ſuffer anything of this ſort to eſcape our Harriet. Women, make themſelves ſo cheap at the public places in and about town, that new faces are more enquired after than even fine faces conſtantly ſeen. Harriet has an honeſt artleſs bloom in her cheeks; ſhe may attract notice as a novice: But wherefore do you fill her head with an expectation of conqueſts? Women, added he, offer themſelves at every public place, in rows, as at a market. Becauſe three or four ſilly fellows here in the country (like people at an auction, who raiſe the price upon each other above its value) have bid for her, you think ſhe will not be able to ſet her foot out of doors, without increaſing the number of her followers.

And then my Uncle would have it, that my head would be unable to bear the *conſequence* which the partiality of my other friends gave me.

It

It is true, my Lucy, that we young women are too apt to be pleaſed with the admiration *pretended* for us by the other Sex. But I have always endeavour'd to keep down any fooliſh pride of this ſort, by ſuch conſiderations as theſe: That flattery is the vice of men: That they ſeek to raiſe us in order to lower us, and in the end to exalt themſelves on the ruins of the pride they either hope to find, or inſpire: That humility, as it ſhines brighteſt in a high condition, beſt becomes a flattered woman of all women: That ſhe who is puffed up by the praiſes of men, on the ſuppoſed advantages of perſon, anſwers *their end* upon her; and ſeems to own, that ſhe thinks it a principal part of *hers*, to be admired by them: And what can give more importance to them, and leſs to herſelf, than this? For have not women ſouls as well as men, and ſouls as capable of the nobleſt attainments, as theirs? Shall they not therefore be moſt ſolicitous to cultivate the beauties of the mind, and to make thoſe of perſon but of inferior conſideration? The bloom of beauty holds but a very few years; and ſhall not a woman aim to make herſelf miſtreſs of thoſe perfections that will dignify her advanced age? And then may ſhe be as wiſe, as venerable—as my Grandmamma. *She* is an example for us, my dear: Who is ſo much reſpected, who is ſo much beloved, both by old and young, as my Grandmamma Shirley?

In purſuance of the ſecond injunction, I will now deſcribe ſome young ladies and gentlemen who paid my Couſins their compliments on their arrival in town.

Miſs Alleſtree, Daughter of Sir John Alleſtree, was one. She is very pretty, and very genteel, eaſy, and free. I believe I ſhall love her.

Miſs Bramber was the ſecond. Not ſo pretty as Miſs Alleſtree; but agreeable in her perſon and air. A little too talkative, I think.

It was one of my Grandfather's rules to me, Not impertinently to ſtart ſubjects, as if I would make an oſtentation

oſtentation of knowledge; or as if I were fond of indulging a talking humour: But frankneſs and complaiſance required, he uſed to ſay, that we women ſhould unlock our boſoms, when we were called upon, and were expected to give our ſentiments upon any ſubject.

Miſs Bramber was *eager* to talk. She ſeemed, even when ſilent, to look as if ſhe was ſtudying for ſomething to ſay, altho' ſhe had exhauſted two or three ſubjects. This charge of volubility, I am the rather inclined to fix upon her, as neither Mr. nor Mrs. Reeves took notice to me of it, as a thing extraordinary; which, probably, they would have done, if ſhe had exceeded her uſual way. And yet, perhaps, the joy of ſeeing her newly arrived friends might have open'd her lips. If ſo, your pardon, ſweet Miſs Bramber!

Miſs Sally, her youngeſt Siſter, is very amiable and very modeſt: a little kept down, as it ſeems, by the vivacity of her eldeſt Siſter; between whoſe ages there are about ſix or ſeven years: So that Miſs Bramber ſeems to regard her Siſter as one whom ſhe is willing to remember as the *girl* ſhe was two or three years ago; for Miſs Sally is not above ſeventeen.

What confirmed me in this, was, that the younger Lady was a good deal more free when her Siſter was withdrawn, than when ſhe was preſent; and again purſed-up her really pretty mouth when ſhe returned: And her Siſter addreſſed her always by the word *Child*, with an air of elderſhip; while the other called her *Siſter*, with a look of obſervance.

Theſe were the ladies.

The two gentlemen who came with them, were, Mr. Barnet, a Nephew of Lady Alleſtree, and Mr. Somner.

Mr. Somner is a young gentleman lately married; very affected, and very opinionated. I told Mrs. Reeves, after he was gone, that I believed he was a dear Lover of his perſon; and ſhe owned he was.

Yet

Yet had he no great reaſon for it. It is far from extraordinary; tho' he was very gaily dreſſed. His wife, it ſeems, was a young widow of great fortune; and till ſhe gave him conſequence by falling in love with him, he was thought to be a modeſt good ſort of young man; one that had not diſcovered any more perfections in himſelf, than other people beheld in him; and this gave her an excuſe for liking him. But now he is loquacious, forward, bold, thinks meanly of the Sex; and, what is worſe, not the higher of the Lady, for the preference ſhe has given him.

This gentleman took great notice of me; and yet in ſuch a way, as to have me think, that the approbation of ſo excellent a judge as himſelf, did me no ſmall honour.

Mr. Barnet is a young man, that I imagine will be always young. At firſt I thought him *only* a ſop. He affected to ſay ſome things, that, tho' trite, were ſententious, and carried with them the air of obſervation. There is ſome degree of merit in having ſuch a memory, as will help a perſon to repeat and apply other men's wit with ſome tolerable propriety. But when he attempted to walk alone, he ſaid things that it was impoſſible a man of common ſenſe could ſay. I pronounce therefore boldly about *him*: Yet by his outward appearance he may paſs for one of your pretty fellows; for he dreſſes very gaily. Indeed if he has any taſte, it is in dreſs; and this he has found out; for he talked of little elſe, when he *led* the talk; and boaſted of ſeveral parts of *his*. What finiſhed him with me, was, that as often as the converſation ſeemed to take a ſerious turn, he aroſe from his ſeat, and hummed an Italian air; of which however he knew nothing: But the ſound of his own voice ſeemed to pleaſe him.

This fine gentleman recollected ſome high-flown compliments, and, applying them to me, looked as if he expected I ſhould value myſelf upon them.

No wonder that men in general think meanly of us women, if they believe we have ears to hear, and folly to be pleaſed with, the frothy things that paſs under the name of *Compliments*, from ſuch *ranaom-ſhooters* as theſe.

Miſs Stevens paid us a viſit this afternoon. She is the daughter of Colonel Stevens, a very worthy man. She appears ſenſible and unaffected; has read, my couſin ſays, a good deal; and yet takes no pride in ſhewing it.

Miſs Darlington came with her. They are related. This young lady has, I find, a pretty taſte in poetry. Mrs. Reeves prevailed on her to ſhew us three of her performances. And now, as it was with ſome reluctance that ſhe ſhewed them, is it fair to ſay anything about them? I ſay it only to you, my friends. —One was *on the parting of two Lovers;* very ſenſible; and ſo tender, that it ſhewed the fair writer knew how to deſcribe the pangs that may be innocently allowed to ariſe on ſuch an occaſion.—One *on the Morning-dawn*, and Sun-riſe; a ſubject that gave credit to herſelf; for ſhe is, it ſeems, a very early riſer. I petitioned for a copy of this, for the ſake of two or three of my dear couſins, as well as to confirm my own practice; but I was modeſtly refuſed.—The third was on the death of a favourite Linnet; a little too pathetic for the occaſion; ſince were Miſs Darlington to have loſt her beſt and deareſt friend, I imagine that ſhe had in this piece, which is pretty long, exhauſted the ſubject; and muſt borrow from it ſome of the images which ſhe introduces to heighten her diſtreſs for the loſs of the little ſongſter. It is a very difficult matter, I believe, for young perſons of genius to rein-in their imaginations. A great flow of ſpirits, and great ſtore of images crouding in upon them, carry them too frequently above their ſubject; and they are apt rather to ſay all that *may* be ſaid on their favourite topics, than what is *proper* to be ſaid. But it is a pretty piece, however.

Thurſday

Thurſday Morning.

LADY Betty Williams ſupp'd with us the ſame evening. She is an agreeable woman, the widow of a very worthy man, a near relation of Mr. Reeves. She has a great and juſt regard for my couſin, and conſults him in all affairs of importance. She ſeems to be turned of Forty; has a ſon and a daughter; but they are both abroad for education.

It hurt me to hear her declare, that ſhe cared not for the trouble of Education; and that ſhe had this pleaſure, which girls brought up at home ſeldom give their mothers; that ſhe and Miſs Williams always ſaw each other, and always parted, as Lovers.

Surely there muſt be ſome fault either in the temper of the mother, or in the behaviour of the daughter; and if ſo, I doubt it will not be amended by ſeeing each other but ſeldom. Do not Lovers thus cheat and impoſe upon one another.

The young gentleman is about Seventeen; his ſiſter about Fifteen: And, as I underſtand ſhe is a very lively, and, 'tis feared, a forward girl, ſhall we wonder, if in a few years time ſhe ſhould make ſuch a choice for her huſband as Lady Betty would leaſt of all chooſe for a ſon-in-law? What influence can a mother expect to have over a daughter from whom ſhe ſo voluntarily eſtranges herſelf? and from whoſe example the daughter can receive only hearſay benefits?

But after all, methinks I hear my correcting Uncle aſk, May not Lady Betty have *better* reaſons for her conduct in this particular, than ſhe gave you?—She may, my Uncle, and I hope ſhe has: But I wiſh ſhe had condeſcended to give thoſe better reaſons, ſince ſhe gave any; and then you had not been troubled with the impertinent remarks of your ſaucy Niece.

Lady Betty was ſo kind as to take great notice of me. She deſired to be one in every party of pleaſure that I am to be engaged in. Perſons who were often at public places, ſhe obſerved, took as much delight

in

in accompanying ſtrangers to them, as if they were their own. The apt compariſons, ſhe ſaid; the new remarks; the pretty wonder; the agreeable paſſions excited in ſuch, on the occaſion; always gave her high entertainment: And ſhe was ſure from the obſervation of *ſuch* a young lady, civilly bowing to me, ſhe ſhould be equally delighted and improved. I bowed in ſilence. I love not to make diſqualifying ſpeeches; by ſuch we ſeem to intimate that we believe the complimenter to be in earneſt, or perhaps that we think the compliment our due, and want to hear it either repeated or confirmed; and yet, poſſibly, we have not that pretty confuſion, and thoſe tranſient bluſhes, ready, which Mr. Greville archly ſays are always to be at hand when we affect to diſclaim the praiſes given us.

Lady Betty was ſo good as to ſtop there; tho' the muſcles of her agreeable face ſhewed a polite promptitude, had I, by diſclaiming her compliments, provoked them to perform their office.

Am I not a ſaucy creature?

I know I am. But I diſlike not Lady Betty, for all that.

I am to be carried by her to a Maſquerade, to a Ridotto; when the ſeaſon comes, to Ranelagh and Vauxhall: In the mean time, to Balls, Routs, Drums, and-ſo-forth; and to qualify me for theſe latter, I am to be taught all the faſhionable Games. Did my dear Grandmamma, twenty or thirty years ago, think ſhe ſhould live to be told, That to the Dancing-maſter, the Singing or Muſic-maſter, the high mode would require the Gaming-maſter to be added for the completing of the female education?

Lady Betty will kindly take the lead in all theſe diverſions.

And now, Lucy, will you not repeat your wiſhes, that I return to you with a ſound heart? And are you not afraid that I ſhall become a modern fine Lady? As to the latter fear, I will tell you *when* you ſhall ſuſpect

Thurſday Morning.

LADY Betty Williams ſupp'd with us the ſame evening. She is an agreeable woman, the widow of a very worthy man, a near relation of Mr. Reeves. She has a great and juſt regard for my couſin, and conſults him in all affairs of importance. She ſeems to be turned of Forty; has a ſon and a daughter; but they are both abroad for education.

It hurt me to hear her declare, that ſhe cared not for the trouble of Education; and that ſhe had this pleaſure, which girls brought up at home ſeldom give their mothers; that ſhe and Miſs Williams always ſaw each other, and always parted, as Lovers.

Surely there muſt be ſome fault either in the temper of the mother, or in the behaviour of the daughter; and if ſo, I doubt it will not be amended by ſeeing each other but ſeldom. Do not Lovers thus cheat and impoſe upon one another.

The young gentleman is about Seventeen; his ſiſter about Fifteen: And, as I underſtand ſhe is a very lively, and, 'tis feared, a forward girl, ſhall we wonder, if in a few years time ſhe ſhould make ſuch a choice for her huſband as Lady Betty would leaſt of all chooſe for a ſon-in-law? What influence can a mother expect to have over a daughter from whom ſhe ſo voluntarily eſtranges herſelf? and from whoſe example the daughter can receive only hearſay benefits?

But after all, methinks I hear my correcting Uncle aſk, May not Lady Betty have *better* reaſons for her conduct in this particular, than ſhe gave you?—She may, my Uncle, and I hope ſhe has: But I wiſh ſhe had condeſcended to give thoſe better reaſons, ſince ſhe gave any; and then you had not been troubled with the impertinent remarks of your ſaucy Niece.

Lady Betty was ſo kind as to take great notice of me. She deſired to be one in every party of pleaſure that I am to be engaged in. Perſons who were often at public places, ſhe obſerved, took as much delight

in

in accompanying ſtrangers to them, as if they were their own. The apt compariſons, ſhe ſaid; the new remarks; the pretty wonder; the agreeable paſſions excited in ſuch, on the occaſion; always gave her high entertainment: And ſhe was ſure from the obſervation of *ſuch* a young lady, civilly bowing to me, ſhe ſhould be equally delighted and improved. I bowed in ſilence. I love not to make diſqualifying ſpeeches; by ſuch we ſeem to intimate that we believe the complimenter to be in earneſt, or perhaps that we think the compliment our due, and want to hear it either repeated or confirmed; and yet, poſſibly, we have not that pretty confuſion, and thoſe tranſient bluſhes, ready, which Mr. Greville archly ſays are always to be at hand when we affect to diſclaim the praiſes given us.

Lady Betty was ſo good as to ſtop there; tho' the muſcles of her agreeable face ſhewed a polite promptitude, had I, by diſclaiming her compliments, provoked them to perform their office.

Am I not a ſaucy creature?

I know I am. But I diſlike not Lady Betty, for all that.

I am to be carried by her to a Maſquerade, to a Ridotto; when the ſeaſon comes, to Ranelagh and Vauxhall: In the mean time, to Balls, Routs, Drums, and-ſo-forth; and to qualify me for theſe latter, I am to be taught all the faſhionable Games. Did my dear Grandmamma, twenty or thirty years ago, think ſhe ſhould live to be told, That to the Dancing-maſter, the Singing or Muſic-maſter, the high mode would require the Gaming-maſter to be added for the completing of the female education?

Lady Betty will kindly take the lead in all theſe diverſions.

And now, Lucy, will you not repeat your wiſhes, that I return to you with a ſound heart? And are you not afraid that I ſhall become a modern fine Lady? As to the latter fear, I will tell you *when* you ſhall ſuſpect

me—If you find that I prefer the higheſt of theſe entertainments, or the Opera itſelf, well as I love muſic, to a good Play of our favourite Shakeſpeare, then, my Lucy, let your heart ake for your Harriet: Then, be apprehenſive that ſhe is laid hold on by levity; that ſhe is captivated by the Eye and the Ear; that her heart is infected by the modern taſte; and that ſhe will carry down with her an appetite to pernicious gaming; and, in order to ſupport her extravagance, will think of puniſhing ſome honeſt man in marriage.

James has ſignified to Sally his wiſhes to be allowed to return to Selby-houſe. I have not therefore bought him the new liveries I deſigned for him on coming to town. I cannot bear an unchearful brow in a ſervant; and he owning to me, on my talking with him, his deſire to return, I have promiſed that he *ſhall*, as ſoon as Mr. Reeves has provided me with another ſervant. —Silly fellow! But I hope my aunt will not diſmiſs him upon it. The ſervant I may hire, may not care to go into the country perhaps, or may not ſo behave, as that I ſhould chooſe to take him down with me. And James is honeſt; and his mother would break her heart, if he ſhould be diſmiſſed our ſervice.

Several ſervants have already offered themſelves; but, as I think people are anſwerable for the character of ſuch as they chooſe for their domeſtics, I find no ſmall difficulty in fixing. I am not of the mind of that great man, whoſe good-natur'd reaſon for ſometimes preferring men no way deſerving, was, that he loved to be a friend to thoſe whom no other perſon would befriend. This was carrying his goodneſs very far (if he made it not an excuſe for himſelf, for having promoted a man who *proved* bad *afterwards*, rather than as ſuppoſing him to be ſo at the *time*); ſince elſe, he ſeemed not to conſider, that every bad man he promoted, ran away with the reward due to a better.

Mr.

Mr. and Mrs. Reeves are ſo kind to me, and their ſervants are ſo ready to oblige me, that I ſhall not be very uneaſy, if I cannot ſoon get one to my mind. Only if I could fix on ſuch a one, and if my Grandmamma's Oliver ſhould leave her, as ſhe ſuppoſes he will, now he has married Ellen, as ſoon as a good Inn offers, James may ſupply Oliver's place, and the new ſervant may continue mine inſtead of James.

And now that I have gone ſo low, don't you wiſh me to put an end to this Letter?—I believe you do.

Well then, with Duty and Love ever remembred where ſo juſtly due, believe me to be, my dear Lucy,

Your truly affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.

I will write ſeparately to what you ſay of Mr. Greville, Mr. Fenwick, and Miſs Orme; yet hope to be time enough for the poſt.

LETTER VI.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Sat. Jan. 28.

AS to what you ſay of Mr. Greville's concern on my abſence (and, I think, with a little too much feeling for him) and of his declaring himſelf unable to live without ſeeing me; I have but one fear about it; which is, that he is forming a pretence from his *violent* Love, to come up after me: And if he does, I will not ſee him, if I I can help it.

And do you indeed believe him to be ſo much in Love? By your ſerioufneſs on the occaſion, you ſeem to think he is. O my Lucy! What a good heart you have! And did he not weep when he told you ſo? Did he not turn his head away, and pull out his handkerchief!—O theſe diſſemblers! The hyæna, my dear, was a *male* devourer. The men in malice, and to extenuate their own guilt, made the creature a *fe-*

a *female*. And yet there may be male and female of this ſpecies of monſters. But as women have more to loſe with regard to reputation than men, the male hyæna muſt be infinitely the more dangerous creature of the two; ſince he will come to us, even into our very houſes, fawning, cringing, weeping, licking our hands; while the den of the female is by the high-way-ſide, and wretched youths muſt enter into it, to put it in her power to devour them.

Let me tell you, my dear, that if there be an artful man in England, with regard to us women (artful equally in his free ſpeaking, and in his ſycophancies) Mr. Greville is the man: And he *intends* to be ſo too, and values himſelf upon his art. Does he not as boldly as conſtantly, inſinuate, That flattery is dearer to a woman than her food? Yet who ſo groſs a flatterer as himſelf, when the humour is upon him? And yet at times he wants to build up a merit for ſincerity or plain-dealing, by ſaying free things.

It is not difficult, my dear, to find out theſe men, were we earneſt to detect them. Their chief ſtrength lies in our weakneſs. But however weak we are, I think we ſhould not add to the triumph of thoſe who make our weakneſs the general ſubject of their ſatire. We ſhould not prove the juſtice of their ridicule by our own indiſcretions. But the traitor is within us. If we guard againſt ourſelves, we may bid defiance to all the arts of man.

You know, that my great objection to Mr. Greville is for his immoralities. A man of free principles, ſhewn by practices as free, can hardly make a tender huſband, were a woman able to get over conſiderations that ſhe ought *not* to get over. Who ſhall truſt for the performance of his *ſecond* duties, the man who avowedly deſpiſes his *firſt*? Mr. Greville had a good education: He muſt have taken *pains* to render vain the pious precepts of his worthy father; and ſtill more to make a jeſt of them.

Three

Three of his women we have heard of, beſides her whom he brought with him from Wales. You know he has only affected to appear decent ſince he has caſt his eyes upon me. The man, my dear, muſt be an abandon'd man, and muſt have a very hard heart, who can paſs from woman to woman, without any remorſe for a former, whom, as may be ſuppoſed, he has by the moſt ſolemn vows ſeduced. And whoſe leavings is it, my dear, that a virtuous woman takes, who marries a profligate?

Is it not reported that his Welſhwoman, to whom, at parting, he gave not ſufficient for a twelvemonth's ſcanty ſubſiſtence, is now upon the town? Vile man! He thinks it to his credit, I have heard, to own it a ſeduction, and that ſhe was not a vicious creature till he made her ſo.

One only merit has Mr. Greville to plead in this black tranſaction: It is, That he has, by his whole conduct in it, added a warning to our Sex. And ſhall I, deſpiſing the warning, marry a man, who, ſpecious as he is in his temper, and lively in his converſation, has ſhewn ſo bad a nature?

His fortune, as you ſay, is great. The more inexcuſable therefore is he for his niggardlineſs to his Welſhwoman. On his fortune he preſumes: It will procure him a too eaſy forgiveneſs from others of our Sex: But fortune without merit will never do with me, were the man a prince.

You ſay, that if a woman reſolves not to marry till ſhe finds herſelf addreſſed to by a man of ſtrict virtue, ſhe muſt be for ever ſingle. If this be true, what wicked creatures are men? What a dreadful abuſe of paſſions, given them for the nobleſt purpoſes, are they guilty of!

I have a very high notion of the marriage-ſtate. I remember what my uncle once averred; That a woman out of wedlock is half uſeleſs to the end of her being. How indeed do the duties of a good Wife,

of a good Mother, and a worthy Matron, well performed, dignify a woman! Let my aunt Selby's example, in her enlarged ſphere, ſet againſt that of any ſingle woman of like years moving in her narrow circle, teſtify the truth of the obſervation. My grandfather uſed to ſay, that families are little communities; that there are but few ſolid friendſhips out of them; and that they help to make up worthily, and to ſecure, the great community, of which they are ſo many miniatures.

But yet it is my opinion, and I hope that I never by my practice ſhall diſcredit it, that a woman who, with her eyes open, marries a profligate man, had, generally, much better remain ſingle all her life; ſince it is very likely, that by ſuch a ſtep ſhe defeats, as to herſelf, all the good ends of ſociety. What a dreadful, what a *preſumptuous* riſque runs ſhe, who marries a wicked man, even hoping to reclaim him, when ſhe cannot be ſure of keeping her own principles!—*Be not deceived; evil communication corrupts good manners;* is a caution truly apoſtolical.

The text you mention of the *unbelieving huſband* being converted by the *believing wife*, reſpects, as I take it, the firſt ages of Chriſtianity; and is an inſtruction to the converted wife to let her unconverted huſband ſee in her behaviour to him, *while he beheld her chaſte converſation coupled with fear*, the efficacy upon her own heart of the excellent doctrines ſhe had embraced. It could not have in view the woman who, *being ſingle*, choſe a *pagan huſband* in hopes of *converting him*. Nor can it give encouragement for a woman of virtue and religion to marry a profligate in hopes of *reclaiming* him. *Who can touch pitch, and not be defiled?*

As to Mr. Fenwick, I am far from having a better opinion of him than I have of Mr. Greville. You know what iswhiſpered of him. He has more decency however: He *avows* not free principles, as the other

other does. But you muſt have obſerved how much he ſeems to enjoy the mad talk and free ſentiments of the other: And that other always brightens up and riſes in his freedoms and impiety on Mr. Fenwick's ſly applauſes and encouraging countenance. In a word, Mr. Fenwick, not having the ſame lively things to ſay, nor ſo lively an air to carry them off, as Mr. Greville has, tho' he would be thought not to want ſenſe, takes pains to ſhew that he has as corrupt a heart. If I thought anger would not give him conſequence, I ſhould hardly forbear to ſhew myſelf diſpleaſed, when he points by a leering eye, and by a broad ſmile, the free jeſt of the other, to the perſon preſent whom he thinks moſt apt to bluſh, as if for fear it ſhould be loſt; and ſtill more, when on the modeſt cheek's ſhewing the ſenſibility of the perſon ſo inſulted, he breaks out into a loud laugh, that ſhe may not be able to recover herſelf.

Surely theſe men muſt think us women egregious hypocrites: They muſt believe that we only affect modeſty, and in our hearts approve of their freedom: For, can it be ſuppoſed, that ſuch as call themſelves Gentlemen, and who have had the education and opportunities that theſe two have had, would give themſelves liberties of ſpeech on *purpoſe* to affront us?

I hope I ſhall find the London gentlemen more polite than theſe our neighbours of the Fox-chace: And yet hitherto I have ſeen no great cauſe to prefer them to the others. But about the Court, and at the faſhionable public places, I expect wonders. Pray Heaven, I may not be diſappointed!

Thank Miſs Orme, in my name, for the kind wiſhes ſhe ſends me. Tell her, that her doubts of my affection for her are not juſt; and that I do really and indeed love her. Nor ſhould ſhe want the moſt explicit declarations of my Love, were I not more afraid of her in the character of a *Siſter* to a truly reſpectable man, than doubtful of her in that of a friend to me:

In which latter light, I even joy to conſider her. But ſhe is a little naughty, tell her, becauſe ſhe is always leading to one ſubject. And yet, how can I be angry with her for it, if her good opinion of me induces her to think it in my power to make the Brother happy, whom ſhe ſo dearly and deſervedly loves? I cannot but eſteem her for the part ſhe takes.—And this it is that makes me afraid of the artleſsly-artful Miſs Orme.

It would look as if I thought my Duty, and Love, and Reſpects, were queſtionable, if in every Letter I repeated them to my equally honoured and beloved benefactors, friends, and favourers. Suppoſe them therefore always included in my ſubſcription to you, my Lucy, when I tell you that I am, and will be,

Your ever-affectionate
HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER VII.

Mr. SELBY, *To Miſs* BYRON.

Selby-Houſe, Jan. 30.

WELL! and now there wants but a London Lover or two to enter upon the ſtage, and *Vanity-Fair* will be proclaimed, and directly open'd. Greville every where magnifying you in order to juſtify his flame for you: Fenwick exalting you above all women: Orme adoring you, and by his humble ſilence ſaying more than any of them: Propoſals beſides from this man: Letters from that! What ſcenes of flattery and nonſenſe have I been witneſs to for theſe paſt three years and half, that young Mr. Elford began the dance? Single! Well may you have remained ſingle till this your twentieth year, when you have ſuch choice of admirers, that you don't know which to have. So in a mercer's ſhop, the tradeſman has a fine time with you women; when variety of his rich wares diſtract you; and fifty to one at laſt, but

as

as well in *men* as *ſilks*, you chooſe the worſt, eſpecially if the beſt is offer'd at firſt, and refuſed. For women know better how to be ſorry, than to amend.

"It is true, ſay you, that we young women are "apt to be pleaſed with admiration—" Oh ho! Are you ſo? And ſo I have gained one point with you at laſt; have I?

"But I have always endeavoured" [And I, Harriet, wiſh you had ſucceeded in your endeavours] "to keep "down any fooliſh pride"—Then you own that pride you have?—Another point gained! Conſcience, honeſt conſcience, *will* now-and-then make you women ſpeak out. But now I think of it, here is vanity in the very humility. Well ſay you *endeavoured*, when female pride, like Love, tho' hid under a barrel, will flame out at the bung.

Well, ſaid I, to your aunt Selby, to your grandmamma, and to your couſin Lucy, when we all met to ſit in judgment upon your Letters, now I hope you'll never diſpute with me more on this flagrant love of admiration which I have ſo often obſerv'd ſwallows up the hearts and ſouls of you all; ſince your Harriet is not exempt from it; and ſince with all her ſpeciouſneſs, with all her prudence, with all her caution, ſhe (taken with a qualm of conſcience) owns it.

But, no, truly! All is right that you *ſay*: All is right that you *do!*—Your very confeſſions are brought as ſo many demonſtrations of your diffidence, of your ingenuouſneſs, and I cannot tell what.

Why, I muſt own, that no father ever loved his daughter as I love my niece: But yet, girl, your faults, your vanities, I do not love. It is my glory, that I think myſelf able to judge of my friends as they *deſerve*; not as being *my* friends. Why, the beſt beloved of my heart, your aunt herſelf—you know, I value her now more, now leſs, as ſhe deſerves. But with all thoſe I have named, and with all your rela-

tions indeed, their Harriet cannot be in fault. And why? Becauſe you are related to *them;* and becauſe they attribute to themſelves ſome merit from the relation they ſtand in to you. *Supererogatorians* all of them (I *will* make words whenever I pleaſe) with their *attributions* to you; and becauſe you are of their Sex, forſooth; and becauſe I accuſe you in a point in which you are all concern'd, and ſo make a common cauſe of it.

Here one exalts you for your *good ſenſe;* becauſe you have a knack, by help of a happy memory, of making every thing you read, and every thing that is told you, that you like, your own (your grandfather's precepts particularly); and becauſe, I think, you paſs upon us as your own what you have borrowed, if not ſtolen.

Another praiſes you for your *good-nature*—The deuce is in it, if a girl who has crouds of admirers after her, and a new Lover where ever ſhe ſhews her bewitching face; who is bleſt with health and ſpirits; and has every-body for her friend, let her deſerve it or not; can be *ill*-natured. Who can ſuch a one have to quarrel with, trow?

Another extols you for your *chearful wit,* even when diſplayed, bold girl as you are, upon your uncle; in which indeed you are upheld by the wife of my boſom, whenever I take upon me to tell you what ye all, even the beſt of ye, are.

Yet ſometimes they praiſe your *modeſty:* And *why* your modeſty?—Becauſe you have a ſkin in a manner tranſparent; and becauſe you can bluſh—I was going to ſay, whenever you pleaſe.

At other times, they will find out, that you have features equally delicate and regular; when I think, and I have examin'd them jointly and ſeparately, that all your *takingneſs* is owing to that open and chearful countenance, which gives them a gloſs (or what ſhall I call it?) that we men are apt to be pleaſed with at firſt ſight.

ſight. A gloſs that takes one, as it were, by ſurprize. But give me the beauty that grows upon us every time we ſee it; that leaves room for ſomething to be found out to its advantage, as we are more and more acquainted with it.

"Your correcting uncle," you call me. And ſo I will be. But what hope have I of your amendment, when every living ſoul, man, woman, and child, that knows you, puffs you up? There goes Mr Selby? I have heard ſtrangers ſay—And who is Mr. Selby another ſtranger has aſk'd—Why, Mr. Selby is uncle to the celebrated Miſs Byron—Yet I, who have lived fifty years in this county, ſhould think I might be known on my *own* account; and not as the *uncle* of a girl of twenty.

"Am I not a ſaucy creature?" in another place you aſk. And you anſwer. "I know I am." I am glad you do. Now may I call you ſo by your own authority, I hope. But with your aunt, it is only the effect of your *agree-able* vivacity. What abominable partiality! E'en do what you will, Harriet, you'll never be in fault. I could almoſt wiſh—But I won't tell you what I wiſh neither. But ſomething muſt betide you, that you little think of; depend upon that. All your days cannot be halcyon ones. I would give a thouſand pounds with all my ſoul, to ſee you heartily in love: Ay, up to the very ears, and unable to help yourſelf! You are not *thirty* yet, child: And, indeed, you ſeem to *think* the time of danger is *not over*. I am glad of your *conſciouſneſs*, my dear. Shall I tell Greville of your doubts, and of your difficulties, Harriet? As to the ten *coming* years, I mean? And ſhall I tell him of your prayer to paſs them ſafely?—But is not this wiſh of yours, that ten years of bloom were over-paſt, and that you were arrived at the thirtieth year of your age, a very ſingular one?—A flight! A mere flight! Aſk ninety-nine of your Sex out of an hundred, if they would adopt it.

In another Letter you aſk Lucy, "If Mr. Greville "has not ſaid, that flattery is dearer to a woman than "her food." Well niece, and what would you be at? Is it not ſo?—I do aver, that Mr. Greville is a ſenſible man; and makes good obſervations.

"Men's chief ſtrength, you ſay, lies in the weak-"neſs of women." Why ſo it does. Where elſe ſhould it lie; And this from their immeaſurable love of admiration and flattery, as here you ſeem to acknowledge of your own accord, tho' it has been ſo often perverſely diſputed with me. Give you women but rope enough, you'll do your own buſineſs.

However, in many places you have pleaſed me: But no-where more than when you recollect my *averr-ment* (without contradicting it; which is a rarity!) "that a woman out of wedlock is half uſeleſs to the "end of her being." Good girl! That was an aſſertion of mine, and I will abide by it. Lucy ſimper'd when we came to this place, and looked at me. She expected, I ſaw, my notice upon it; ſo did your aunt: But the confeſſion was ſo frank, that I was generous; and only ſaid, True as the goſpel.

I have written a long Letter: Yet have not ſaid one quarter of what I intended to ſay when I began. You will allow that you have given your *correcting* uncle, ample ſubject. But you fare ſomething the better for ſaying, "you unbeſpeak not your monitor."

You *own* that you have ſome vanity. Be more free in your acknowledgements of this nature (you *may*; for are you not a woman?) and you'll fare ſome-thing the better for your ingenuouſneſs; and the rather, as your acknowledgement will help me up with your aunt and Lucy, and your grandmamma, in an argument I will not give up

I have had freſh applications made to me—But I will not ſay from whom: Since we have agreed long ago not to preſcribe to ſo diſcreet a girl, as in the main, we all think you in the articles of Love and Marriage. With

With all your faults I must love you. I am half ashamed to say how much I miss you already. We are all naturally chearful folks: Yet, I don't know how it is; your absence has made a strange chasm at our table. Let us hear from you every post: That will be something. Your doting aunt tells the hours on the day she expects a letter. Your grandmother is at present with us, and in heart I am sure regrets your absence: But as your tenderness to her has kept you from going to London for so many years, she thinks she ought to be easy. Her example goes a great way with us all, you know; and particularly with

Your truly affectionate
(tho' correcting) *uncle,*
GEO. SELBY.

LETTER VIII.

Miss BYRON, *To Miss* SELBY.

Tuesday, Jan. 31.

I AM already, my dear Lucy, quite contrary to my own expectation, enabled to obey the third general injunction laid upon me at parting, by you, and all my dear friends; since a gentleman, not inconsiderable in his family or fortune, has already beheld your Harriet with partiality.

Not to heighten your impatience by unnecessary parade, his name is *Fowler*. He is a young gentleman of an handsome independent fortune, and still larger expectations from a Welsh uncle now in town, Sir Rowland Meredith, knighted in his Sheriffalty, on occasion of an address which he brought up to the King from his County.

Sir Rowland, it seems, requires from his Nephew, on pain of forfeiting his favour for ever, that he marries not without his approbation: Which, he declares, he never will give, except the woman be of a good family; has a gentlewoman's fortune; has had the benefit

of a religious education; which he conſiders as the beſt ſecurity that can be given for her good behaviour as a wife, and as a *mother*; ſo forward does the good Knight look! Her character unſullied: Acquainted with the theory of the domeſtic duties, and not aſhamed, occaſionally, to enter into the direction of the practice. Her fortune, however, as his nephew will have a good one, he declares to be the leaſt thing he ſtands upon; only that he would have her poſſeſſed of from ſix to ten thouſand pounds, that it may not appear to be a match of mere Love, and as if his nephew were *taken in*, as he calls it, rather by the eyes, than by the underſtanding. Where a woman can have ſuch a fortune given her by her family, tho' no greater, it will be an earneſt, he ſays, that the family ſhe is of have *worth*, as he calls it, and want not to owe obligations to that of the man ſhe marries.

Something particular, ſomething that has the look of forecaſt and prudence, you'll ſay, in the old knight.

O but I had like to have forgot; his future niece muſt alſo be handſome. He values himſelf, it ſeems, upon the breed of his horſes and dogs, and makes polite compariſons between the *more* noble, and the *leſs* noble animals.

Sir Rowland himſelf, as you will gueſs by his particularity, is an old bachelor, and one who wants to have a woman made on purpoſe for his nephew; and who poſitively inſiſts upon qualities, before he knows her, not one of which, perhaps, his future niece will have.

Don't you remember Mr. Tolſon of Derbyſhire; He was determined never to marry a widow. If he did, it ſhould be one who had a vaſt fortune, and who never had a child And he had ſtill a more particular exception; and that was to a woman who had red hair. He held his exceptions till he was forty; and then being looked upon as a determin'd bachelor, no family thought it worth their while to make propoſals to

him; no woman to throw out a net for him (to expreſs myſelf in the ſtile of the gay Mr. Greville); and he at laſt fell in with, and married, the laughing Mrs. Turner: A widow, who had little or no fortune, had one child, a daughter, living, and that child an abſolute idiot; and, to complete the perverſeneſs of his fate, her hair not only red, but the moſt diſagreeable of reds. The honeſt man was grown ſplenetic: diſregarded by every body, he was become diſregardful of himſelf: He hoped for a cure of his gloomineſs, from her chearful vein; and ſeemed to think himſelf under obligation to one who had taken notice of him, when nobody elſe would. - Bachelors' wives! Maids' children! Theſe old ſaws always mean ſomething.

Mr. Fowler ſaw me at my couſin Reeves's the firſt time. I cannot ſay he is diſagreeable in his *perſon*: But he ſeems to want the *mind* I would have a man bleſs'd with, to whom I am to vow love and honour. I purpoſe, whenever I marry, to make a very good and even a dutiful wife [Muſt I not vow obedience? And ſhall I break my marriage-vow?]: I would not, therefore, on any conſideration, marry a man, whoſe want of knowledge might make me ſtagger in the performance of my duty to him; and who would perhaps command from caprice, or want of underſtanding, what I ſhould think unreaſonable to be complied with. There is a pleaſure and a credit in yielding up even one's judgment in things indifferent, to a man who is older and wiſer than one's ſelf: But we are apt to doubt in one of a contrary character, what in the other we ſhould have no doubt about: And doubt, you know, of a perſon's merit, is the firſt ſtep to diſreſpect: And what, but diſobedience, which lets in every evil, is the next?

I ſaw inſtantly that Mr. Fowler beheld me with a diſtinguiſhed regard. We women, you know [Let me for once be aforehand with my Uncle] are very quick in making diſcoveries of this nature. But every-

body

body at table ſaw it. He came again next day, and beſought Mr. Reeves to give him his intereſt with me, without aſking any queſtions about my fortune; tho' he was even generouſly particular as to his own. He might, ſince he has an unexceptionable one. Who is it in theſe caſes that forgets to ſet foremoſt the advantages by which he is diſtinguiſhed? While fortune is the laſt thing talk'd of by him who has little or none: And then *Love, Love, Love,* is all his cry.

Mr. Reeves, who has a good opinion of Mr. Fowler, in anſwer to his enquiries, told him, that he believed I was diſengaged in my affections: Mr. Fowler rejoiced at that. That I had no queſtions to aſk; but thoſe of duty; which indeed, he ſaid, was a ſtronger tie with me than intereſt. He praiſed my temper, and my frankneſs of heart; the latter at the expence of my Sex; for which I leaſt thank'd him, when he told me what he had ſaid. In ſhort, he acquainted him with every thing that was neceſſary, and more than was neceſſary for him to know, of the favour of my family, and of my good Mr. Deane, in referring all propoſals of this kind to myſelf; mingling the detail with commendations, which only could be excuſed by the goodneſs of his own heart, and accounted for by his partiality to his couſin.

Mr. Fowler expreſſed great apprehenſions on my couſin's talking of theſe references of my grandmother, aunt, and Mr. Deane, to myſelf, on occaſions of this nature; which, he ſaid, he preſumed had been too frequent for his hopes.

If you have any hope, Mr. Fowler, ſaid Mr. Reeves, it muſt be in your good character; and that much preferably to your clear eſtate and great expectations. Although ſhe takes no pride in the number of her admirers, yet it is natural to ſuppoſe, that it has made her more difficult; and her difficulties are enhanced, in proportion to the generous confidence which all her friends have in her diſcretion. And

when

when I told him, proceeded Mr. Reeves, that your fortune exceeded greatly what Sir Rowland required in a wife for him; and that you had, as well from inclination, as education, a ſerious turn: Too much, too much, in one perſon, cried he out. As to fortune, he wiſhed you had not a ſhilling; and if he could obtain your favour, he ſhould be the happieſt man in the world.

O my good Mr. Reeves, ſaid I, how have you over-rated my merits! Surely, you have not given Mr. Fowler your intereſt? If you *have*, ſhould you not, for *his* ſake, have known ſomething of my mind before you had ſet me out thus, had I even deſerved your high opinion?—Mr. Fowler might have reaſon to repent the double well-meant kindneſs of his friend, if men in theſe days were uſed to break their hearts for Love.

It is the language I do and muſt talk of you in, to every-body, return'd Mr. Reeves: Is it not the language that thoſe moſt talk who know you beſt?

Where the world is inclined to favour, replied I, it is apt to *over*-rate, as much as it will *under*-rate where it diſfavours. In this caſe, you ſhould not have proceeded ſo far as to engage a gentleman's hopes. What may be the end of all this, but to make a compaſſionate nature, as mine has been thought to be, if Mr. Fowler ſhould be greatly in earneſt, uneaſy to itſelf, in being obliged to ſhew Pity, where ſhe cannot return Love?

What I have ſaid, I have ſaid, replied Mr. Reeves. Pity is but one remove from Love. Mrs. Reeves (there ſhe ſits) was firſt brought to pity me; for never was man more madly in love than I; and then I thought myſelf ſure of her. And ſo it proved. I can tell you I am no enemy to Mr. Fowler.

And ſo, my dear, Mr. Fowler ſeems to think he has met with a woman who would make a fit wife for him: But your Harriet, I doubt, has not in Mr. Fowler

Fowler met with a man whom ſhe can think a fit huſband for her.

The very next morning, Sir Rowland himſelf—

But now, my Lucy, if I proceed to tell you all the fine things that are ſaid *of* me, and *to* me, what will my uncle Selby ſay? Will he not attribute all I ſhall repeat of this ſort, to that pride, to that vanity, to that fondneſs of admiration, which he, as well as Mr. Greville, is continually charging upon all our Sex?

Yet he expects that I ſhall give a minute account of every thing that paſſes, and of every converſation in which I have any part. How ſhall I do to pleaſe him? And yet I know I ſhall *beſt* pleaſe him, if I give him room to find fault with me. But then ſhould he for my faults blame the whole Sex? Is that juſt?

You will tell me, I know, that if I give ſpeeches and converſations, I ought to give them juſtly: That the humours and characters of perſons cannot be known unleſs I repeat *what* they ſay, and their *manner* of ſaying: That I muſt leave it to the ſpeakers and complimenters to anſwer for the likeneſs of the pictures they draw: That I know beſt my own heart, and whether I am puffed up by the praiſes given me: That if I *am*, I ſhall diſcover it by my ſuperciliouſneſs; and be enough puniſhed on the diſcovery, by incurring, from thoſe I love, deſerved blame, if not contempt, inſtead of preſerving their wiſhed-for eſteem.—Let me add to all this, that there is an author (I forget who) who ſays, "It is lawful to repeat thoſe things, tho' "ſpoken in our praiſe, that are neceſſary to be known, "and cannot otherwiſe be come at."

And now let me aſk, Will this preamble do, once for all?

It will. And ſo ſays my aunt Selby. And ſo ſays every one but my uncle. Well then I will proceed, and repeat all that ſhall be ſaid, and that as well to my diſadvantage as advantage; only reſolving not to be exalted with the one, and to do my endeavour to amend

amend by the other. And here, pray tell my uncle, that I do not deſire he will ſpare me; ſince the faults he ſhall find in his Harriet ſhall always put her upon her guard—Not, however, to conceal them from his diſcerning eye; but to amend them.

And now, having, as I ſaid, once for all, prepared you to guard againſt a ſurfeit of ſelf-praiſe, tho' delivered at ſecond or third hand, I will go on with my narrative—But hold—my paper reminds me that I have written a monſtrous Letter—I will therefore, with a new ſheet, begin a new one. Only adding to this, that I am, and ever will be,

Your affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.

P. S. Well, but what ſhall I do now?—I have juſt received my uncle's Letter. And, after his charge upon me of Vanity and Pride, will my parade, as above, ſtand me in any ſtead?—I muſt truſt to it. Only one word to my dear and ever-honoured uncle—Don't you, Sir, impute to me a belief of the truth of thoſe extravagant compliments made by men profeſſing Love to me; and I will not wiſh you to think me one bit the wiſer, the handſomer, the better, for them, than I was before.

LETTER IX.

Miſs BYRON. *In continuation.*

Thurſday, Feb. 2.

THE very next morning Sir Rowland himſelf paid his reſpects to Mr. Reeves.

The Knight, before he would open himſelf very freely as to the buſineſs he came upon, deſired that he might have an opportunity to ſee me. I knew nothing of him, nor of his buſineſs. We were juſt going to breakfaſt. Miſs Alleſtree, Miſs Bramber, and Miſs Dolyns, a young Lady of merit, were with us.

Juſt

Juſt as we had taken our ſeats, Mr. Reeves introduced Sir Rowland, but let him not know which was Miſs Byron. He did nothing at firſt ſitting down, but peer in our faces by turns; and fixing his eye upon Miſs Alleſtree, he jogged Mr. Reeves with his elbow—Hay, Sir?—audibly whiſpered he.

Mr. Reeves was ſilent. Sir Rowland, who is ſhort-ſighted, then look'd under his bent brows, at Miſs Bramber; then at Miſs Dolyns; and then at me—Hay, Sir? whiſpered he again.

He ſat out the firſt diſh of tea with an impatience equal, as it ſeemed, to his uncertainty. And at laſt taking Mr. Reeves by one of his buttons, deſired a word with him. They withdrew together; and the Knight, not quitting hold of Mr. Reeves's button, Ads-my-life, Sir, ſaid he, I hope I am right. I love my nephew as I love myſelf. I live but for him. He ever was dutiful to me his uncle. If that be Miſs Byron who ſits on the right-hand of your Lady, with the countenance of an angel, her eyes ſparkling with good humour, and blooming as a May-morning, the buſineſs is *done*. I give my conſent. Altho' I heard not a word paſs from her lips, I am ſure ſhe is all intelligence. My boy *ſhall* have her. The other young Ladies are agreeable: But if this be the Lady my kinſman is in love with, he *ſhall* have her. How will ſhe outſhine all our Caermarthen Ladies; and yet we have charming girls in Caermarthen!—Am I, or am I not right, Mr. Reeves, as to my nephew's *flame*, as they call it?

The Lady you deſcribe, Sir Rowland, is Miſs Byron.

And then Mr. Reeves, in his uſual partial manner, let his heart overflow at his lips in my favour.

Thank God, thank God! ſaid the Knight. Let us return. Let us go in again. I will ſay ſomething to her to make her ſpeak: But not a word to daſh her. I expect her voice to be muſic, if it be as harmonious

nious as the reſt of her. By the ſoftneſs or harſhneſs of her voice, let me tell you, Mr. Reeves, I form a judgment of the heart, and ſoul, and manners, of a Lady. 'Tis a *criterion*, as they call it, of my own; and I am hardly ever miſtaken. Let us go in again, I pray ye.

They returned, and took their ſeats; the Knight making an aukward apology for taking my couſin out.

Sir Rowland, his forehead ſmoothed, and his face ſhining, ſat ſwelling, as big with meaning, yet not knowing how to begin. Mrs. Reeves and Miſs Alleſtree were talking at the re-entrance of the gentlemen. Sir Rowland thought he muſt ſay ſomething, however diſtant from his main purpoſe. Breaking ſilence therefore; You, Ladies, ſeemed to be deep in diſcourſe when we came in. Whatever were your ſubject, I beg you will reſume it.

They had finiſhed, they aſſured him, what they had to ſay.

Sir Rowland ſeemed ſtill at a loſs. He hemm'd three times; and looked at me with particular kindneſs. Mr. Reeves then, in pity to his fulneſs, aſked him how long he propoſed to ſtay in town?

He had thought, he ſaid, to have ſet out in a week; but ſomething had happened, which he believed could not be completed under a *fortnight*. Yet I want to be down, ſaid he; for I had juſt finiſhed, as I came up, the new-built houſe I deſign to preſent to my nephew when he marries. I pretend, plain man as I am, to be a judge, both of taſte and elegance [Sir Rowland was now ſet a going.] All I wiſh for is to ſee him happily ſettled. Ah, Ladies! that I need not go further than this table for a wife for my boy?

We all ſmiled, and looked upon each other.

You young Ladies, proceeded he, have great advantages in certain caſes over us men; and this (which I little thought of till it came to be my own caſe) whether

whether we ſpeak for our kindred or for ourſelves. But will you, Madam, to Mrs. Reeves, will you, Sir, to Mr. Reeves, anſwer my queſtions—as to theſe Ladies?—I *muſt* have a niece among them. My nephew, tho' I ſay it, is one whom any Lady may love: And as for fortune, let me alone to make him, in *addition* to his own, all clear as the ſun, worthy of any woman's acceptance, tho' ſhe were a Ducheſs.

We were all ſilent, and ſmiled upon one another.

What I would aſk then, is, Which of the Ladies before me—Mercy! I believe by their ſmiling, and by their pretty looks, they are none of them engaged. I will begin with the young Lady on your right hand. She looks *ſo* lovely, *ſo* good-natured, and *ſo* condeſcending!—Mercy! what an open forehead!—Hem! —Forgive me, madam; but I believe you would not diſdain to anſwer my queſtion yourſelf. Are you, madam, are you abſolutely and *bonâ fide*, diſengaged? or are you not?

As this, Sir Rowland, anſwered I, is a queſtion I can beſt reſolve, I frankly own, that I am diſengaged.

Charming! charming!—Mercy! Why now what a noble frankneſs in that anſwer!—No jeſting matter! You may ſmile, Ladies. I hope, madam, you ſay true: I hope I may rely upon it, that your affections are not engaged.

You may, Sir Rowland. I do not love, even in jeſt, to be guilty of an untruth.

Admirable!—But let me tell you, madam, that I hope you will not many days have this to ſay. Ads-my-life! ſweet ſoul! how I rejoice to ſee that charming fluſh in the fineſt cheek in the world! But heaven forbid that I ſhould daſh ſo ſweet a creature!—Well, but now there is no going further. Excuſe me, Ladies; I mean not a ſlight to any of you: But now, you know, there is no going further:—And will you, madam, permit me to introduce to you, as a Lover, as an humble Servant, a very proper and agreeable

agreeable young man? *Let* me introduce him: He is *my* nephew. Your looks are all graciouſneſs. Perhaps you have ſeen him: And if you are really diſengaged, you can have no objection to him; of that I am confident. And I am told, that you have nobody that ei ther *can* or *will* controul you.

The more controulable for that very reaſon, Sir Rowland.

Ad's-my-life, I like your anſwer. Why, madam, you muſt be full as good as you look to be. I wiſh I were a young man myſelf for *your ſake!* But tell me, madam, will you permit a viſit from my nephew this afternoon?—Come, come, dear young Lady, be as gracious as you look to be. Fortune muſt do. Had you not a ſhilling, I ſhould rejoice in ſuch a niece: And that is more than I ever ſaid in my life before. My nephew is a ſober man, a modeſt man. He has a good eſtate of his own: A clear 2000*l.* a year. I will add to it in my life time as much more. Be all this good company witneſſes for me. I am no flincher. It is well known that the word of Sir Rowland Meredith is as good as his bond at all times. I love theſe open doings. I love to be above-board. What ſignifies ſhilly-ſhally? What ſays the old proverb?

Happy is the wooing
That is not long a doing.

But, Sir Rowland, ſaid I, there are proverbs that may be ſet againſt your proverb. You hint that I have ſeen the gentleman: Now I have never yet ſeen the man whoſe addreſſes I could encourage.

O, I like you the better for that. None but the *giddy* love at firſt ſight. Ad's-my-life, you would have been ſnapt up before now, young as you are, could you eaſily have returned Love for Love. Why, madam, you cannot be above ſixteen?

O, Sir Rowland, you are miſtaken. Chearfulneſs, and a contented mind, make a difference to advantage

tage of half a dozen years at any time. I am much nearer twenty-one than *nineteen*, I aſſure you.

Nearer to twenty-one than *nineteen*, and yet ſo freely tell your age without aſking!

Miſs Byron, Sir Rowland, ſaid Mrs. Reeves, is young enough at twenty, ſurely, to own her age.

True, madam; but at twenty, if not before, time always ſtands ſtill with women. A Lady's age once known, will be always remembred; and that more for ſpite than love. At twenty-eight or thirty, I believe moſt ladies are willing to ſtrike off half a dozen years at leaſt.—And yet, and yet, (ſmiling, and looking arch) I have always ſaid (pardon me, Ladies) that it is a ſign, when women are ſo deſirous to conceal their age, that they think they ſhall be good for nothing when in years. Ah, Ladies! ſhaking his head, and laughing, women don't think of that. But how I admire you, madam, for your frankneſs! Would to the Lord you were twenty-four!—I would have no woman marry under twenty-four: And that, let me tell you, Ladies, for the following reaſons—ſtanding up, and putting the fourth-finger of his right-hand, extended with a flouriſh, upon the thumb of his left.

O, Sir Rowland! I doubt not but you can give very good reaſons. And I aſſure you, I intend not to marry on the wrong ſide, as I call it, of twenty-four.

Admirable, by Mercy! but that won't do neither. The man lives not, young Lady, who will ſtay your time, if he can have you at his. I love your noble frankneſs. Then ſuch ſweetneſs of countenance (ſitting down, and audibly whiſpering, and jogging my couſin with his elbow) ſuch dove-like eyes, daring to tell all that is in the honeſt heart!—I am a phyſiognomiſt, madam (raiſing his voice to me.) Ad's-my-life, you are a perfect paragon! Say you will encourage my boy, or you will be worſe off; for (ſtanding up again) I will come and court you myſelf. A good eſtate gives a man

a man confidence; and, when I ſet about it—Hum!—(one hand ſtuck in his ſide; flouriſhing with the other) no woman yet, I do aſſure you,—ever won my heart as you have done.

O Sir Rowland, I thought you were too wiſe to be ſwayed by firſt impreſſions: None but the *giddy*, you know, love at firſt ſight.

Admirable! admirable indeed! I knew you had wit at will; and I am ſure you have wiſdom. Know you, Ladies, that *wit* and *wiſdom* are two different things, and are very rarely ſeen together? Plain man as I appear to be (looking on himſelf firſt on one ſide, then on the other, and unbuttoning his coat two buttons to let a gold braid appear upon his waiſtcoat) I can tell ye, I have not lived all this time for nothing. I am conſidered in Wales—Hem!—But I will not praiſe myſelf.—Ad's-my-life! how do this young Lady's perfections run me all into tongue!—But I ſee you all reſpect her as well as I; ſo I need not make apology to the reſt of you young Ladies, for the diſtinction paid to her. I wiſh I had as many nephews as there are Ladies of ye diſengaged: By Mercy, we would be all of akin.

Thank you, Sir Rowland, ſaid each of the young Ladies, ſmiling, and diverted at his oddity.

But as to my obſervation, continued the knight, that none but the *giddy* love at firſt ſight; there is no general rule without exception, you know: Every man *muſt* love *you* at firſt ſight. Do I not love you myſelf? and yet never did I ſee you before, nor anybody like you.

You know not what you do, Sir Rowland, to raiſe thus the vanity of a poor girl. How may you make conceit and pride run away with her, till ſhe become contemptible for both in the eye of every perſon whoſe good opinion is worth cultivating?

Ad's-my-life, that's prettily ſaid! But let me tell you, that the *ſhe* who can give this caution in the midſt

midſt of her praiſings, can be in no danger of being run away with by her vanity. Why, madam! you *extort* praiſes from me! I never ran on ſo glibly in praiſe of mortal woman before. You muſt ceaſe to look, to ſmile, to ſpeak, I can tell you, if you would have me ceaſe to praiſe you!

'Tis well you are not a young man, Sir Rowland, ſaid Miſs Alleſtree. You ſeem to have the art of engaging a woman's attention. You ſeem to know how to turn her own artillery againſt her; and, as your Sex generally do, to exalt her in courtſhip, that you may have it in your power to abaſe her afterwards.

Why, madam, I muſt own, that we men live to ſixty, before we know how to deal with you ladies, or with the world either; and then we are not fit to engage with the one, and are ready to quit the other. An old head upon a young pair of ſhoulders would make rare work among ye. But to the main point (looking very kindly on me): I aſk no queſtions about you, madam. Fortune is not to be mentioned. I want you not to have any. Not that the Lady is the worſe for having a fortune: And a man may ſtand a chance for as good a wife among thoſe who have fortunes, as among thoſe who have none. I adore you for your frankneſs of heart. Be all of a piece now, I beſeech you. You are diſengaged, you ſay: Will you admit of a viſit from my nephew? My boy may be baſhful. True love is always modeſt and diffident. You don't look as if you would diſlike a man for being modeſt. And I will come along with him *myſelf*.

And then the old knight look'd important, as one who if he lent his head to his nephew's ſhoulders, had no doubt of ſucceeding.

What, Sir Rowland! admit of a viſit from your nephew, in order to engage him in a three years courtſhip? I have told you that I intend not to marry till I am twenty-four.

Twenty-

Twenty-four, I muſt own, is the age of marriage I ſhould chooſe for a Lady; and for the reaſons aforeſaid.—But, now I think of it, I did not tell you my reaſons—Theſe be they—

Down went his cup and ſaucer; up went his left hand ready ſpread, and his crooked finger of his right hand, as ready to enumerate.

No doubt, Sir Rowland, you have very good reaſons.

But, madam, you muſt *hear* them—And I ſhall prove—

I am convinced, Sir Rowland, that twenty-four is an age early enough.

But I ſhall prove, madam, that you at twenty, or at twenty-one—

Enough, enough, Sir Rowland: What need of proof when one is convinced?

But you know not, madam, what I was driving at—

Well but, Sir Rowland, ſaid Miſs Bramber, will not the reaſons you could give for the proper age at twenty-four, make againſt your wiſhes in this caſe?

They will make againſt them, madam, in general caſes: But in this particular caſe they will make for me: For the Lady before me is—

Not in my opinion, perhaps, Sir Rowland, will your reaſons make for you: And then your exception in my favour will ſignify nothing. And beſides, you muſt know, that I never can accept of a compliment that is made me at the expence of my Sex.

Well then, madam, I hope you forbid me in favour to my plea. You are loth to hear any-thing for twenty-four againſt twenty-one, I hope?

That is another point, Sir Rowland.

Why, madam, you ſeem to be afraid of hearing my reaſons. No man living knows better than I,

how to behave in Ladies' company. I believe I ſhould not be ſo little of a gentleman, as to offend the niceſt ear. No need indeed! no need indeed! looking archly; Ladies on certain ſubjects are very quick.

That is to ſay, Sir Rowland, interrupted Mrs. Reeves, that modeſty is eaſily alarmed.

If any-thing is ſaid, or implied, upon certain ſubjects that you would not be thought to underſtand, Ladies know how to be ignorant.

And then he laughed.

Undoubtedly, Sir Rowland, ſaid I, ſuch company as this, need not be apprehenſive, that a gentleman like you, ſhould ſay any-thing unſuitable to it. But do you really think affected ignorance can be ever graceful, or a proof of true delicacy? Let me rather ſay, That a woman of virtue would be wanting to her character, if ſhe had not courage enough to expreſs her reſentment of any diſcourſe that is meant as an inſult upon modeſty.

Admirably ſaid again! But men will ſometimes forget, that there are Ladies in company.

Very favourably put for the men, Sir Rowland. But pardon me, if I own, that I ſhould have a mean opinion of a man, who allowed himſelf to talk even to *men* what a woman might not hear. A pure heart, whether in man or woman, will be always, in every company, on every occaſion, pure.

Ads-my-life, you have excellent notions, madam! I wanted to hear you ſpeak juſt now: And now you make me, and every one elſe, ſilent—Twenty-one! why what you ſay would ſhame *Sixty one*. You muſt have kept excellent company all your life!—Mercy! if ever I heard the like from a Lady ſo young!—What a glory do you reflect back upon all who had any hand in your education! Why was I not born within the paſt thirty years? I might then have had ſome hopes of you myſelf!—And this brings me to

my

my former ſubject, of my Nephew—But, Mr. Reeves, one word with you, Mr. Reeves. I beg your pardon, Ladies: But the importance of the matter will excuſe me: And I muſt get out of town as ſoon as I can—One word with you, Mr. Reeves.

The gentlemen withdrew together: For breakfaſt by this time was over. And then the Knight opened all his heart to Mr. Reeves, and beſought his intereſt. He would afterwards have obtained an audience, as he called it, of me: But the three young Ladies having taken leave of us, and Mrs. Reeves and I being retired to dreſs, I excuſed myſelf.

He then deſired leave to attend me to-morrow evening: But Mr. Reeves pleading engagements till Monday evening, he beſought him to indulge him with his intereſt in that long *gap of time*, as he called it, and for my being then in the way.

And thus, Lucy, have I given you an ample account of what has paſſed with regard to this new ſervant; as gentlemen call themſelves, in order to become our maſters.

'Tis now Friday morning. We are juſt ſetting out to dine with Lady Betty. If the day furniſhes me with any amuſing materials for my next pacquet, its agreeableneſs will be doubled to

Your ever-affectionate

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER X.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

Friday Night.

SOME amuſement, my Lucy, the day has afforded: Indeed more than I could have wiſhed. A large pacquet, however, for Selby-houſe.

Lady Betty received us moſt politely. She had company with her, to whom ſhe introduced us, and preſented me in a very advantageous character.

Shall I tell you how their firſt appearance ſtruck me, and what I have ſince heard and obſerved of them?

The firſt I ſhall mention was Miſs CANTILLON; very pretty; but viſibly proud, affected, and conceited.

The ſecond Miſs CLEMENTS; plain; but of a fine underſtanding, improved by reading; and who having no perſonal advantages to be vain of, has, by the cultivation of her mind, obtained a preference in every one's opinion over the fair Cantillon.

The third was Miſs BARNEVELT, a Lady of maſculine features, and whoſe mind belied not thoſe features; for ſhe has the character of being loud, bold, free, even fierce when oppoſed; and affects at all times ſuch airs of contempt of her own Sex, that one almoſt wonders at her condeſcending to wear petticoats.

The gentlemen's names were WALDEN and SINGLETON; the firſt, an Oxford Scholar of family and fortune; but quaint and opinionated, deſpiſing every one who has not had the benefit of an Univerſity Education.

Mr. Singleton is a harmleſs man; who is, it ſeems, the object of more ridicule, even down to his very name, among all his acquaintance, than I think he by any means ought, conſidering the apparent inoffenſiveneſs of the man, who did not give *himſelf* his intellects; and his conſtant good humour, which might intitle him to better quarter; the rather too as he has one point of knowlege, which thoſe who think themſelves his ſuperiors in underſtanding, do not always attain, the knowlege of himſelf; for he is humble, modeſt, ready to confeſs an inferiority to every one: And as laughing at a jeſt is by ſome taken for high applauſe, he is ever the firſt to beſtow that commendation

mendation on what others ſay; tho' it muſt be owned, he now and then miſtakes for a jeſt what is none: Which, however, may be generally more the fault of the ſpeakers than of Mr. Singleton; ſince he takes his cue from their ſmiles, eſpecially when thoſe are ſeconded by the laugh of one of whom he has a good opinion.

Mr. Singleton is in poſſeſſion of a good eſtate, which makes amends for many defects: He has a turn, it is ſaid, to the well-managing of it; and nobody underſtands his own intereſt better than he; by which knowlege, he has opportunities to lay obligations upon many of thoſe, who behind his back think themſelves intitled by their ſuppoſed ſuperior ſenſe to deride him: And he is ready enough to oblige in this way: But it is always on ſuch ſecurities, that he has never given cauſe for ſpendthrifts to laugh at him on that account.

It is thought that the friends of the fair Cantillon would not be averſe to an alliance with this gentleman: While I, were I his Siſter, ſhould rather wiſh, that he had ſo much wiſdom in his weakneſs, as to devote himſelf to the worthier Pulcheria Clements (Lady Betty's wiſh as well as mine) whoſe fortune, though not deſpicable, and whoſe humbler views, would make her think herſelf repaid, by his fortune, the obligation ſhe would lay him under by her acceptance of him.

Nobody, it ſeems, thinks of a *huſband* for Miſs Barnevelt. She is ſneeringly ſpoken of rather as a *young fellow*, than as a woman; and who will one day look out for a *wife* for herſelf. One reaſon indeed, ſhe every-where gives, for being ſatisfied with being a woman; which is, *that ſhe cannot be married to a* WOMAN.

An odd creature, my dear. But ſee what women get by going out of character. Like the Bats in the fable, they are looked upon as mortals of a doubtful

ſpecies, hardly owned by either, and laughed at by both.

This was the company, and all the company, beſides us, that Lady Betty expected. But mutual civilities had hardly paſſed, when Lady Betty, having been called out, returned, introducing, as a gentleman who would be acceptable to every one, Sir HARGRAVE POLLEXFEN. He is, whiſpered ſhe to me, as he ſaluted the reſt of the company, in a very gallant manner, a young Baronet of a very large eſtate, the greateſt part of which has lately come to him by the death of a Grandmother, and two Uncles, all very rich.

When he was preſented to me, by name, and I to him, I think myſelf very happy, ſaid he, in being admitted to the preſence of a young Lady ſo celebrated for her graces of perſon and mind. Then, addreſſing himſelf to Lady Betty, Much did I hear, when I was at the laſt Northampton Races, of Miſs Byron: But little did I expect to find report fall ſo ſhort of what I ſee.

Miſs Cantillon bridled, played with her fan, and looked as if ſhe thought herſelf ſlighted: a little ſcorn intermingled with the airs ſhe gave herſelf.

Miſs Clements ſmiled, and looked pleaſed, as if ſhe enjoyed, good-naturedly, a compliment made to one of the Sex which ſhe adorns by the goodneſs of her heart.

Miſs Barnevelt ſaid, ſhe had, from the moment I firſt entered, beheld me with the eye of a Lover. And freely taking my hand, ſqueezed it.—Charming creature! ſaid ſhe, as if addreſſing a country innocent, and perhaps expecting me to be covered with bluſhes and confuſion.

The Baronet, excuſing himſelf to Lady Betty, aſſur dher, that ſhe muſt place this his bold intruſion to the account of Miſs Byron; he having been told that ſhe was to be there.

What-

Whatever were his motive, Lady Betty ſaid, he did her favour; and ſhe was ſure the whole company would think themſelves *doubly* obliged to Miſs Byron.

The Student looked as if he thought himſelf eclipſed by Sir Hargrave, and as if, in revenge, he was putting his fine ſpeeches into Latin, and trying them by the rules of grammar; a broken ſentence from a claſſic author burſting from his lips; and, at laſt, ſtanding up, half on tip-toe (as if he wanted to look down upon the Baronet) he ſtuck one hand in his ſide, and paſſed by him, caſting a contemptuous eye on his gaudy dreſs.

Mr. Singleton ſmiled, and looked as if delighted with all he ſaw and heard. Once indeed, he tried to ſpeak: His mouth actually opened, to give paſſage to his words; as ſometimes ſeems to be his way before the words are quite ready: But he ſat down ſatisfied with the effort.

It is true, people who do not make themſelves contemptible by affectation ſhould not be deſpiſed. Poor and rich, wiſe and unwiſe, we are all links of the ſame great chain. And you muſt tell me, my dear, if I, in endeavouring to give true deſcriptions of the perſons I ſee, incur the cenſure I paſs on others who deſpiſe any one for the defects they cannot help.

Will you forgive me, my dear, if I make this Letter as long as my laſt?

No, ſay.

Well then, I thank you for a freedom ſo conſiſtent with our friendſhip: And conclude with aſſurances, that I am, and ever will be,

Moſt affectionately Yours,

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XI.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

IT was convenient to me, Lucy, to break off juſt where I did in my laſt; elſe I ſhould not have been ſo very ſelf-denying as to ſuppoſe you had no curioſity to hear, what undoubtedly I wanted to tell. Two girls talking over a new ſet of company, would my Uncle Selby ſay, are not apt to break off very abruptly; not ſhe eſpecially of the two, who has found out a fair excuſe to repeat every compliment made to herſelf; and when perhaps there may be a new admirer in the caſe.

May there ſo, my Uncle? And which of the gentlemen do you think the man? The Baronet, I ſuppoſe, you gueſs.—And ſo he is.

Well then, let me give you, Lucy, a ſketch of him. But conſider; I form my accounts from what I have ſince been told, as well as from what I obſerved at the time.

Sir Hargrave Pollexfen is handſome and genteel; pretty tall, about twenty-eight or thirty. His complexion is a little of the faireſt for a man, and a little of the paleſt. He has remarkably bold eyes; rather approaching to what we would call goggling; and he gives himſelf airs with them as if he wiſhed to have them thought rakiſh: Perhaps as a recommendation, in his opinion, to the Ladies. Lady Betty, on his back being turned, praiſing his perſon, Miſs Cantillon ſaid, Sir Hargrave had the fineſt eyes ſhe ever ſaw in a man. They were manly, *meaning* ones.

He is very voluble in ſpeech; but ſeems to owe his volubility more to his want of doubt, than to the extraordinary merit of what he ſays. Yet he is thought to have ſenſe; and if he could prevail upon

upon himſelf to hear more, and ſpeak leſs, he would better deſerve the good opinion he thinks himſelf ſure of. But as he can ſay any-thing without heſitation, and excites a laugh by laughing himſelf at all he is going to ſay, as well as at what he has juſt ſaid, he is thought infinitely agreeable by the gay, and by thoſe who wiſh to drown thought in merriment.

Sir Hargrave, it ſeems, has travelled: But he muſt have carried abroad with him a great number of follies, and a great deal of affectation, if he has left any of them behind him.

But, with all his foibles, he is ſaid to be a man of enterprize and courage; and young women, it ſeems, muſt take care how they laugh with him: For he makes ungenerous conſtructions to the diſadvantage of a woman whom he can bring to ſeem pleaſed with his jeſts.

I will tell you hereafter, how I came to know this, and even worſe, of him.

The taſte of the preſent age ſeems to be dreſs; No wonder, therefore, that ſuch a man as Sir Hargrave aims to excel in it. What can be miſbeſtowed by a man on his perſon, who values it more than his mind? But he would, in my opinion, better become his dreſs, if the pains he undoubtedly takes before he ventures to come into public, were leſs apparent: This I judge from his ſolicitude to preſerve all in exact order, when in company; for he forgets not to pay his reſpects to himſelf at every glaſs; yet does it with a ſeeming conſciouſneſs, as if he would hide a vanity too apparent to be concealed; breaking from it, if he finds himſelf obſerved, with a half-careleſs yet ſeemingly diſſatisfied air, pretending to have diſcovered ſomething amiſs in himſelf. This ſeldom fails to bring him a compliment: Of which he ſhews himſelf very ſenſible, by affectedly diſclaiming the merit of it; perhaps with this ſpeech, bowing with

his ſpread hand on his breaſt, waving his head to and fro—By my Soul, Madam (or Sir) you do me too much honour.

Such a man is Sir Hargrave Pollexfen.

He placed himſelf next to the country girl; and laid himſelf out in fine ſpeeches to her, running on in ſuch a manner, that I had not for ſome time an opportunity to convince him, that I had been in company of gay people before. He would have it that I was a perfect beauty, and he ſuppoſed me very young —Very ſilly of courſe: And gave himſelf ſuch airs, as if he were ſure of my admiration.

I viewed him ſteadily ſeveral times; and my eye once falling under his, as I was looking at him, I dare ſay, he at that moment pitied the poor fond heart, which he ſuppoſed was in tumults about him; when, at the very time, I was conſidering whether, if I were obliged to have the one or the other, as a puniſhment for ſome great fault I had committed, my choice would fall on Mr. Singleton, or on him. I mean, ſuppoſing the former were not a remarkably obſtinate man; ſince obſtinacy in a weak man, I think, muſt be worſe than tyranny in a man of ſenſe.—If indeed a man of ſenſe can be a tyrant.

A ſummons to dinner relieved me from his more particular addreſſes, and placed him at a diſtance from me.

Sir Hargrave, the whole time of dinner, received advantage from the ſupercilious looks and behaviour of Mr. Walden; who ſeemed, on every-thing the Baronet ſaid (and he was ſeldom ſilent) half to deſpiſe him; for he made at times ſo many different mouths of contempt, that I thought it was impoſſible for the *ſame* features to expreſs them. I have been making mouths in the glaſs for ſeveral minutes, to try to recover ſome of Mr. Walden's, in order to deſcribe them to you, Lucy; but I cannot for my life ſo diſtort my face as to enable me to give you a notion of one of them.

He

He might perhaps have been better juſtified in ſome of his contempts, had it not been viſible, that the conſequence which he took from the Baronet, he gave to himſelf; and yet was as cenſurable one way, as Sir Hargrave was the other.

Mirth, however inſipid, will occaſion ſmiles; tho' ſometimes to the diſadvantage of the mirthful. But gloom, ſeverity, moroſeneſs, will always diſguſt, tho' in a Solomon. Mr. Walden had not been taught that: And indeed it might ſeem a little ungrateful [Don't you think ſo, Lucy;] if women failed to reward a man with their ſmiles, who ſcrupled not to make himſelf a—monkey (ſhall I ſay?) to pleaſe them.

Never before did I ſee the difference between the man of the Town, and the man of the College, diſplayed in a light ſo ſtriking as in theſe two gentlemen in the converſation after dinner. The one ſeemed reſolved not to be pleaſed; while the other laid himſelf out to pleaſe every-body; and that in a manner ſo much at his own expence, as frequently to bring into queſtion his underſtanding. By a *ſecond* ſilly thing he baniſhed the remembrance of the *firſt*; by a *third* the *ſecond*; and ſo on; And by continually laughing at his own abſurdities, left us at liberty to ſuppoſe that his folly was his choice; and that, had it not been to divert the company, he would have made a better figure.

Mr. Walden, as was evident by his ſcornful brow, by the contemptuous motions of his lip, and by his whole face affectedly turned from the Baronet, grudged him the ſmile that ſat upon every one's countenance; and for which, without diſtinguiſhing whether it was ſmile of *approbation* or *not*, he looked as if he pitied us all, and as if he thought himſelf caſt into unequal company. Nay twice or thrice he addreſſed himſelf, in preference to evey one elſe, to honeſt ſimpering Mr. Singleton: Who, for his part

as was evident, much better reliſhed the Baronet's flippances, than the dry ſignificance of the Student. For, whenever Sir Hargrave ſpoke, Mr. Singleton's mouth was open: But it was quite otherwiſe with him, when Mr. Walden ſpoke, even at the time that he paid him the diſtinction of addreſſing himſelf to him, as if he were the principal perſon in the company.

But one word, by the bye, Lucy—Don't you think it is very happy for us fooliſh women, that the generality of the Lords of the *creation* are not much wiſer than ourſelves? Or, to expreſs myſelf in other words, That *over*-wiſdom is as fooliſh a thing to the full, as *moderate* folly!—But, huſh! I have done.—I know that at this place my Uncle will be ready to riſe againſt me.

After dinner, Mr. Walden, not chooſing to be any longer ſo egregiouſly eclipſed by the man of the Town, put forth the ſcholar.

By the way, let me aſk my Uncle, if the word *Scholar* means not the *Learner*, rather than the *Learned?* If it originally means no more, I would ſuppoſe that formerly the moſt learned men were the moſt modeſt, contenting themſelves with being thought but *Learners*; but as my revered firſt inſtructor uſed to ſay, the more a man knows, the more he will find he has to know.

Pray, Sir Hargrave, ſaid Mr. Walden, may I aſk you—You had a thought juſt now, ſpeaking of Love and Beauty, which I know you muſt have from Tibullus [And then he repeated the line in an *heroic* accent; and, pauſing, looked round upon us women] Which Univerſity had the honour of finiſhing your ſtudies, Sir Hargrave I preſume you were brought up at one of them

Not I, ſaid the Baronet: A man, ſurely, may read Tibullus, and Virgil too, without being indebted to either Univerſity for his Learning.

No

No man, Sir Hargrave, in my *humble* opinion [With a deciſive air he ſpoke the word *humble*] can be well-grounded in any branch of Learning, who has not been at one of our famous Univerſities.

I never yet propoſed, Mr Walden, to qualify myſelf for a degree. My chaplain is a very pretty fellow. He underſtands Tibullus, I believe [Immoderately laughing, and by his eyes caſt in turn upon each perſon at table, beſpeaking a general ſmile]—And of Oxford, as you are.

And again he laughed: But his laugh was then ſuch a one as rather ſhewed ridicule than mirth: A provoking laugh, ſuch a one as Mr. Greville often affects when he is in a diſputing humour, in order to daſh an opponent out of countenance, *by getting the Laugh*, inſtead of the Argument, on his ſide.

My Uncle, you know, will have it ſometimes, that his girl has a ſatirical vein. I am afraid ſhe has—But this I will ſay for her: She means no ill-nature: She loves every-body; but not their faults: As her Uncle in his Letter tells her. Nor wiſhes to be ſpared for her own. Nor, very probably, is ſhe, if thoſe who ſee her, write *of* her to their choſen friends as ſhe does to hers, of them.

Shall I tell you what I imagine each perſon of the company I am writing about (writing in character) would ſay of me to *their* correſpondents?—It would be digreſſing too much, or I would.

Mr. Walden in his heart, I dare ſay, was revenged on the Baronet. He gave him ſuch a look, as would have grieved *me* the whole day, had it been given me by one whom I valued,

Sir Hargrave had too much buſineſs for his eyes with the Ladies, in order to obtain their countenance, to trouble himſelf about the looks of the men. And indeed he ſeemed to have as great a contempt for Mr. Walden, as Mr. Walden had for him.

But here I ſhall be too late for the poſt. Will this ſtuff go down with you at Selby-houſe, in want of better ſubjects?

Every-thing from you, my Harriet—

Thank you! Thank you, all, my indulgent friends! So it ever was. Trifles from thoſe we love, are acceptable. May I deſerve your Love.

Adieu, my Lucy!—But tell my Nancy, that ſhe has delighted me by her Letter. H. B.

LETTER XII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

WHAT is *your* opinion, my charming Miſs Byron? ſaid the Baronet: May not a man of fortune, who has *not* received his education and *poliſh* [He pronounced the word *poliſh* with an emphaſis, and another laugh] at an Univerſity, make as good a figure in ſocial Life, and as ardent a Lover, as if he had?

I would have been ſilent: But, gazing in my face, he repeated, What ſay *you* to this, Miſs Byron?

The world, Sir Hargrave, I have heard called an Univerſity: But, is it not an obvious truth, that neither a learned, nor what is called a fine education, has any other value than as each tends to improve the morals of men, and to make them wiſe and good?

The World an Univerſity! replied Mr. Walden. Why, truly, looking up to Sir Hargrave's face, and then down to his feet, diſdainfully, as if he would meaſure him with his eyes, I cannot but ſay, twiſting his head on one ſide, and with drolling accent, that the world produces very pretty ſcholars—for the Ladies—

The Baronet took fire at being ſo contemptuouſly meaſured by the eye of the Student; and I thought it

was

was not amiſs, for fear of high words between them, to put myſelf forward.

And are not women, Mr. Walden, reſumed I, one half in number, tho' not perhaps in value, of the human ſpecies?—Would it not be pity, Sir, if the knowledge that is to be obtained in the *leſſer* Univerſity ſhould make a man deſpiſe what is to be acquired in the *greater*, in which that knowledge was principally intended to make him uſeful?

This diverted Sir Hargrave's anger: Well, Mr. Walden, ſaid he, exultingly rubbing his hands, what ſay you to the young Lady's obſervation? By my ſoul it is worth your notice. You may carry it down with you to *your* Univerſity; and the beſt ſcholars there will not be the worſe for attending to it.

Mr. Walden ſeemed to collect himſelf, as if he were inclined to conſider me with more attention than he had done before; and waving his hand, as if he would put by the Baronet, as an adverſary he had done with, I am to thank you, madam, ſaid he, it ſeems for your obſervation. And ſo the *leſſer* Univerſity—

I have great veneration, Mr. Walden, interrupted I, for Learning, and great honour for learned men—But this is a ſubject—

That you muſt not get off from, young Lady.

I am ſorry to hear you ſay ſo, Sir—But indeed I muſt.

The company ſeemed pleaſed to ſee me ſo likely to be drawn in; and this encouraged Mr. Walden to puſh his weak adverſary.

Know you, madam, ſaid he, any-thing of the learned Languages?

No, indeed, Sir—Nor do I know which, particularly, you call ſo.

The Greek, the Latin, madam.

Who, I, a woman, know any-thing of Latin and Greek! I know but one Lady who is miſtreſs of both;

both; and ſhe finds herſelf ſo much an owl among the birds, that ſhe wants of all things to be thought to have unlearned them.

Why, Ladies, I cannot but *ſay*, that I ſhould rather chooſe to marry a woman whom I could teach ſomething, than one who would think herſelf qualified to teach me.

Is it a *neceſſary* conſequence, Sir, ſaid Miſs Clements, that knowledge, which makes a man ſhine, ſhould make a woman vain and pragmatical? May not two perſons, having the ſame taſte, improve each other? Was not this the caſe of Monſieur and Madame Dacier?

Flint and ſteel to each other, added Lady Betty.

Turkiſh policy, I doubt, in you men, proceeded Miſs Clements—*No ſecond Brother near the throne.* That empire ſome think the ſafeſt which is founded in ignorance.

We know, Miſs Clements, replied Mr. Walden, that you are a well-read Lady. But I have nothing to ſay to obſervations that are in every-body's mouth—Pardon me, madam.

Indeed, Sir, ſaid Mr. Reeves, I think Miſs Clements ſhould *not* pardon you. There is, in my opinion, great force in what ſhe ſaid.

But I have a mind to talk with this fair Lady, your Couſin, Mr. Reeves. She is the very woman that I wiſh to hold an argument with, on the hints ſhe threw out.

Pardon me, Sir. But I will not return the compliment. I cannot argue.

And yet, madam, I will not let you go off ſo eaſily. You ſeem to be very happy in your elocution, and to have ſome pretty notions, for ſo young a Lady.

I cannot argue, Sir.

Dear Miſs Byron, ſaid Sir Hargrave, hear what Mr Walden has to ſay to you.

Every one made the ſame requeſt. I was ſilent looked down, and played with my fan.

When

When Mr. Walden had liberty to ſay what he pleaſed, he ſeemed at a loſs himſelf for words.

At laſt, I aſked you, madam, I aſked you (heſitatingly began he) whether you knew any-thing of the learned Languages? It has been whiſpered to me, that you have had great advantages from a Grandfather, of whoſe learning and politeneſs we have heard much. He was a Scholar. He was of Chriſt-church, in our Univerſity, if I am not miſtaken—To my queſtion you anſwered, That you knew not particularly which were the Languages that I called the learned ones: And you have been pleaſed to throw out hints in relation to the *leſſer* and the *greater* Univerſity; by all which you certainly mean ſomething—

Pray Mr. Walden, ſaid I—

And pray, Miſs Byron—I am afraid of all Smatterers in Learning. Thoſe who know a little—and Ladies cannot know to the bottom—They have not the happineſs of an Univerſity Education—

Nor is every man at the *Univerſity*, I preſume, Sir, a Mr. Walden.

O my Lucy! I have ſince been told, that this pragmatical man has very few admirers in the Univerſity to which, out of it, he is ſo fond of boaſting a relation.

He took what I ſaid for a compliment—Why, as to that, madam — bowing — But this is a misfortune *to* Ladies, not a fault *in* them—But, as I was going to ſay, Thoſe who know little, are very ſeldom found, are very ſeldom orthodox, as we call it, whether reſpecting *Religion* or *Learning*: And as it ſeems you loſt your Grandfather too early to be well-grounded in the latter (in the former Lady Betty, who is my informant, ſays, you are a very *good* young Lady) I ſhould be glad to put you right if you happen to be a little out of the way.

I thank you, Sir, bowing, and (ſimpleton!) ſtill playing with my fan. But, tho' Mr. Reeves ſaid nothing,

thing, he did not think me very politely treated. Yet he wanted, he told me afterwards, to have me drawn out.

He ſhould not have ſerved me ſo, I told him; eſpecially among ſtrangers, and *men*.

Now, madam, will you be pleaſed to inform me, ſaid Mr. Walden, Whether you had any *particular* meaning, when you anſwered, that you knew not which I called the learned Languages? You muſt know, that the Latin and Greeks are of thoſe ſo called.

I beg, Mr. Walden, that I may not be thus ſingled out—Mr. Reeves—Sir—*you* have had an Univerſity Education. Pray relieve your Couſin.

Mr. Reeves ſmiled; bowed his head; but ſaid nothing.

You were pleaſed, madam, proceeded Mr. Walden, to mention one learned Lady; and ſaid that ſhe looked upon herſelf as an owl among the birds.—

And you, Sir, ſaid, that you had rather (and I believe moſt men are of your mind) have a woman you could teach—

Than one who would ſuppoſe ſhe could teach me—I did ſo.

Well, Sir, and would you have me be guilty of an oſtentation that would bring me no credit, if I had had ſome pains taken with me in my education? But indeed, Sir, I know not any-thing of thoſe you call the learned Languages. Nor do I take all Learning to conſiſt in the knowledge of Languages (*a*).

All Learning!—Nor I, madam—But if you place not learning in Language, be ſo good as to tell us what you *do* place it in?

He nodded his head with an air, as if he had ſaid, This pretty Miſs has got out of her depth: I believe I ſhall have her now.

I would rather, Sir, ſaid I, be a hearer than a ſpeaker; and the one would better become me than

(*a*) This argument is reſumed, Vol. VI. p. 363. by a more competent judge both of learning and languages than Mr. Walden.

the

the other. I anſwered Sir Hargrave, becauſe he thought proper to apply to me.

And *I*, madam, apply to you likewiſe.

Then, Sir, I have been taught to think, that a Learned man and a Linguiſt may very well be two perſons.

Be pleaſed to proceed, madam.

Languages, undoubtedly Sir, are of uſe, to let us into the knowledge for which ſo many of the antients were famous—But—

Here I ſtopt. Every one's eyes were upon me. I was a little out of countenance.

In what a ſituation, Lucy, are we women?—If we have ſome little genius, and have taken pains to cultivate it, we muſt be thought guilty of affectation, whether we appear deſirous to conceal it, or ſubmit to have it called forth.

But, what, madam? Pray proceed, eagerly ſaid Mr. Walden—*But*, what, madam?

But have not the moderns, Sir, if I muſt ſpeak, the ſame advantages which the antients had, and ſome which they had not? The firſt great genius's of all had not human example, had not human precepts—

Nor were the firſt genius's *of all* (with an emphaſis, replied Mr. Walden) ſo perfect, as the obſervations of the genius's of after-times, which were built upon their foundations, made *them*; and *they* others. Learning, or Knowledge, as you chuſe to call it, was a progreſſive thing: And it became neceſſary to underſtand the different Languages in which the Sages of antiquity wrote, in order to avail ourſelves of their Learning.

Very right, Sir, I believe. You conſider ſkill in Languages then as a *Vehicle* to Knowlege—Not, I preſume, as *Science* itſelf.

I was ſorry the Baronet laughed; becauſe his laughing made it more difficult for me to get off, as I wanted to do.

Pray,

Pray, Sir Hargrave, ſaid Mr. Walden, let not *every* thing that is ſaid be laughed at. I am fond of talking to this young Lady: And a converſation upon this topic may tend as much to *Edification*, perhaps, as moſt of the ſubjects with which we have been hitherto *entertained*.

Sir Hargrave took an empty glaſs, and with it humorouſly rapped his own knuckles, bowed, ſmiled, and was ſilent; but that act of yielding, which had gracefulneſs in it, gaining more honour to himſelf, than Mr. Walden obtained by his rebuke of him, however juſt.

Now, madam, if you pleaſe, ſaid Mr. Walden (and he put himſelf into a diſputing attitude) a word or two with you, on your *Vehicle*, and-ſo-forth.

Pray ſpare me, Sir: I am willing to ſit down quietly. I am unequal to this ſubject. I have done.

But, ſaid the Baronet, you muſt *not* ſit down quietly, madam: Mr. Walden has promiſed us *Edification*; and we all attend the effect of his promiſe.

No, no, madam, ſaid Mr. Walden, you muſt not come off ſo eaſily. You have thrown out ſome extraordinary things for a *Lady*, and eſpecially for ſo young a Lady. From *you* we expect the opinions of your worthy Grandfather, as well as your own notions. He no doubt told you, or you have read, that the competition ſet on foot between the Learning of the Antients and Moderns, has been the ſubject of much debate among the learned in the latter end of the laſt century.

Indeed, Sir, I know nothing of the matter. I am *not* learned. My Grandfather was chiefly intent to make me an Engliſh, and, I may ſay, a *Bible* ſcholar. I was very young when I had the misfortune to loſe him. My whole endeavour has been ſince, that the pains he took with me, ſhould not be caſt away.

I have

I have diſcovered you, madam, to be a *Parthian* Lady. You can fight flying, I ſee. You muſt not, I tell you, come off ſo eaſily for what you have thrown out. Let me aſk you, Did you ever read *The Tale of a Tub?*

Sir Hargrave laughed out, tho' evidently in the wrong place.

How apt are laughing ſpirits, ſaid Mr. Walden, looking ſolemnly, to laugh, when perhaps they ought —There he ſtopt—[*to be laughed at*, I ſuppoſe he had in his head.] But I will not, however, be laughed out of my queſtion. — Have you, madam, read Swift's *Tale of a Tub?*—There *is* ſuch a book, Sir Hargrave; looking with an air of contempt at the Baronet.

I know there is, Mr. Walden, replied the Baronet, and again laughed—*Have you*, madam; to me? Pray let us know what Mr. Walden drives at.

I have, Sir.

Why then, madam, reſumed Mr. Walden, you no doubt read, bound up with it, *The Battle of the Books*; a very fine piece, written in favour of the Antients, and againſt the Moderns; and thence muſt be acquainted with the famous diſpute I mentioned. And this will ſhew you, that the Moderns are but pygmies in Science compared to the Antients. And, pray, ſhall not the knowledge which enables us to underſtand and to digeſt the wiſdom of theſe immortal Antients be accounted Learning?—Pray, madam, nodding his head, anſwer me that.

O how theſe pedants, whiſpered Sir Hargrave to Mr. Reeves, ſtrut in the livery and braſs buttons of the Antients, and call their ſervility Learning!

You are going beyond my capacity, Sir. I believe what you ſay is very juſt: Yet the Antients may be read, I ſuppoſe, and not underſtood.—But pray, Sir, let the Parthian fly the field. I promiſe you that ſhe

wil

will not return to the charge. *Eſcape*, not *victory*, is all ſhe contends for.

All in good time, madam—But who, pray, learns the Language but with a view to underſtand the Author?

No-body, I believe, Sir. But yet ſome who read the Antients, may fail of improving by them.

I was going to ſay ſomething further; but the Baronet, by his loud and laughing applauſe, diſconcerted me; and I was ſilent.

And here I muſt break off, till I return from the Play: And then, or in the morning early, I will begin on another ſheet.

LETTER XIII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

NOW, Lucy, will I reſume the thread of an argument, that you, perhaps, will not think worth remembering: Yet, as I was called upon by every one to proceed, I would not omit it, were it but to have my Uncle's opinion whether I was not too pert, and too talkative; for my conſcience a little reproaches me. You know I have told him, that I will not unbeſpeak my monitor.

Mr. Walden told me, I ſeemed to think, that the knowledge we gather from the great Antients is hardly worth the pains we take in acquiring the Languages in which they wrote.

Not ſo, Sir. I have great reſpect even for *Linguiſts*: Do we not owe to them the tranſlation of the Sacred Books?—But methinks I could wiſh that ſuch a diſtinction ſhould be made beween *Language* and *Science*, as ſhould convince me, that *that* confuſion of tongues, which was intended for a puniſhment of preſumption in the early ages of the world, ſhould not be thought to give us our greateſt glory in theſe *more enlightened* times.

Well,

Well, madam, Ladies muſt be treated as Ladies. But I ſhall have great pleaſure, on my return to Oxford, in being able to acquaint my learned friends, that they muſt all turn fine gentlemen, and *laughers* [Mr. Reeves had ſmiled as well as the Baronet] and deſpiſe the great Antients as men of ſtraw, or very ſhortly they will ſtand no chance in the Ladies' favour.

Good Mr. Walden! Good Mr. Walden! laughed the Baronet, ſhaking his embroidered ſides, let me, let me, beg your patience, while I tell you, that the young gentlemen at both Univerſities are already in more danger of becoming *fine Gentlemen* than *fine Scholars*—

And then again he laughed; and looking round him, beſpoke, in his uſual way, a laugh from the reſt of the company.

Mr. Reeves, a little touched at the Scholar's reference to him, in the word *laughers*, ſaid, It were to be wiſhed, that, in all Nurſeries of Learning, the *Manners of youth* were propoſed as the principal end. It is too known a truth, ſaid he, that the attention paid to Languages has too generally ſwallowed up all other and more important conſiderations; inſomuch that ſound Morals and good Breeding themſelves are obliged to give way to that which is of little moment, but as it promotes and inculcates thoſe. And learned men, I am perſuaded, if they *dared* to ſpeak out, would not lay ſo much ſtreſs upon mere Languages as you ſeem to do, Mr. Walden.

Learning *here*, replied Mr. Walden, a little peeviſhly, has not a fair tribunal to be tried at. As it is ſaid of the advantages of Birth or Degree, ſo it may be ſaid of Learning; No one deſpiſes it that has pretenſions to it. But, proceed, Miſs Byron, if you pleaſe.

Very true, I believe, Sir, ſaid I: But, on the other hand, may not thoſe who have either, or both, value themſelves too much on that account?

I knew

I knew once, ſaid Miſs Clements, an excellent ſcholar, who thought, that too great a portion of life was beſtowed in the learning of Languages; and that the works of many of the Antients were more to be admired for the ſtamp which antiquity has fixed upon them, and for the ſake of their purity in Languages that cannot alter (and whoſe works are therefore become the ſtandard of thoſe Languages) than for the lights obtained from them by men of genius, in ages that we have reaſon to think more enlightened, as well by new diſcoveries as by revelation.

I am even tempted to aſk, continued ſhe, Whether the reputation of Learning is not oftener acquired by ſkill in thoſe branches of ſcience which principally ſerve for amuſement to inquiſitive and curious minds, than by that in the more uſeful ſort.

Here Mr. Walden interrupted her; and turning to me, as to the weaker adverſary; yet with an air that had ſeverity in it; I could *almoſt* wiſh, ſaid he (and *but* almoſt, as you are a *Lady*) that you, madam, knew the works of the great Antients in their original Languages.

Something, ſaid Miſs Clements, ſhould be left for *men* to excel in. I cannot but approve of Mr. Walden's word *almoſt*.

She then whiſpered me; Pray, Miſs Byron proceed (for ſhe ſaw me a little out of countenance at Mr. Walden's ſevere air)—Strange, added ſhe, ſtill whiſpering, that people who know leaſt how to argue, ſhould be moſt eager to diſpute. Thank Heaven, all Scholars are not like this.

A little encouraged; Pray, Sir, ſaid I, let me aſk one queſtion—Whether you do not think that our Milton, in his *Paradiſe Loſt*, ſhews himſelf to be a very learned man? And yet that work is written wholly in the language of his own Country, as the works of Homer and Virgil were in that of theirs:—And they, I preſume, will be allowed to be learned men.

Milton,

Milton, madam, let me tell you, is infinitely obliged to the great Antients; and his very frequent alluſions to them, and his knowlege of their mythology, ſhew that he is.

His knowlege of their mythology, Sir!—His own ſubject ſo greatly, ſo nobly, ſo divinely, above that mythology!—I have been taught to think, by a very learned man, that it was a condeſcenſion in Milton to the taſte of perſons of more reading than genius in the age in which he wrote, to introduce ſo often as he does, his alluſions to the pagan mythology: And that he neither raiſed his ſublime ſubject, nor did credit to his vaſt genius, by it.

Mr. Addiſon, ſaid Mr. Walden, is a writer admired by the *Ladies*. Mr. Addiſon, madam, as you will find in your Spectators [Sneeringly he ſpoke this] gives but the ſecond place to Milton, on comparing ſome paſſages of his with ſome of Homer.

If Mr. Addiſon, Sir, has not the honour of being admired by the *Gentlemen*, as well as by the *Ladies*, I dare ſay Mr. Walden will not allow, that his authority ſhould decide the point in queſtion: And yet, as I remember, he greatly extols Milton. But I am going out of my depth—Only permit me to ſay one thing more—If Homer is to be preferred to Milton, he muſt be the ſublimeſt of writers; and Mr. Pope, admirable as his tranſlation of the Iliad is ſaid to be, cannot have done him juſtice.

You ſeem, madam, to be a very deep *Engliſh* ſcholar. But ſay you this from your own obſervation, or from that of any other?

I readily own, that my lights are borrowed, replied I. I owe the obſervation to my Godfather Mr. Deane. He is a ſcholar; but as great an admirer of Milton as of any of the Antients. A gentleman, his particular friend, who was as great an admirer of Homer, undertook from Mr. Pope's tranſlation of the Iliad, to produce paſſages that in ſublimity exceeded

any in the Paradiſe Loſt. The gentlemen met at Mr. Deane's houſe, where I then was. They allowed me to be preſent; and this was the iſſue: The gentleman went away convinced, that the Engliſh poet as much excelled the Grecian in the grandeur of his ſentiments, as his ſubject, founded on the Chriſtian ſyſtem, ſurpaſſes the pagan.

The debate, I have the vanity to think, ſaid Mr. Walden, had *I* been a party in it, would have taken another turn; for I do inſiſt upon it, that without the knowledge of the learned Languages, a man cannot underſtand his own.

I oppoſed Shakeſpeare to this aſſertion: But wiſhed on this occaſion, that I had not been a party in this debate; for the Baronet was even noiſy in his applauſes of what I ſaid; and the applauſe of empty minds always gives one ſuſpicion of having *incurred* it by one's over-forwardneſs.

He drowned the voice of Mr. Walden, who two or three times was earneſt to ſpeak; but not finding himſelf heard, drew up his mouth as if to a contemptuous whiſtle, ſhrugged his ſhoulders, and ſat collected in his own conſcious worthineſs: His eyes, however, were often caſt upon the pictures that hung round the room, as much better objects than the living ones before him.

But what extremely diſconcerted me was a freedom of Miſs Barnevelt's; taken upon what I laſt ſaid, and upon Mr. Walden's heſitation, and Sir Hargrave's applauſes: She profeſſed that I was able to bring *her own Sex* into reputation with her. Wiſdom, as I call it, ſaid ſhe, notwithſtanding what you have modeſtly alleged to depreciate your own, when it proceeds through teeth of ivory, and lips of coral, receives a double grace. And then claſping one of her manniſh arms round me, ſhe kiſſed my cheek.

I was ſurpriſed, and offended; and with the more reaſon, as Sir Hargrave, riſing from his ſeat, declared, that

that ſince merit was to be approved in that manner, he thought himſelf obliged to follow ſo good an example.

I ſtood up, and ſaid, Surely, Sir, my compliance with the requeſt of the company, too much I fear at my own expence, calls rather for civility than freedom, from a gentleman. I beg, Sir Hargrave—There I ſtopt; and I am ſure looked greatly in earneſt.

He ſtood ſuſpended till I had done ſpeaking; and then, bowing, ſat down again; but, as Mr. Reeves told me afterwards, he whiſpered a great oath in his ear, and declared, that he beheld with tranſport his future wife; and curſed himſelf if he would ever have another; vowing, in the ſame whiſper, that were a thouſand men to ſtand in his way, he would not ſcruple any means to remove them.

Miſs Barnevelt only laughed at the freedom ſhe had taken with me. She is a loud and fearleſs laugher. She hardly knows *how* to ſmile: For as ſoon as anything catches her fancy, her voice immediately burſts her lips, and widens her mouth to its full extent. Forgive me, Lucy. I believe I am ſpiteful.

Lady Betty and Miſs Clements, in low voices, praiſed me for my preſence of mind, as they called it, in checking Sir Hargrave's forwardneſs.

Juſt here, Lucy, I laid down my pen, and ſtept to the glaſs, to ſee whether I could not pleaſe myſelf with a wiſe frown or two; at leaſt with a ſolemnity of countenance, that, occaſionally, I might daſh with it my childiſhneſs of look; which certainly encouraged this freedom of Miſs Barnevelt. But I could not pleaſe myſelf. My muſcles have never been uſed to any-thing but ſmiling: So favoured, ſo beloved, by every one of my friends; a heart ſo grateful for all their favours—How can I learn now to frown; or even long to look grave?

All this time the Scholar ſat *uneaſily-careleſs*.

In the mean time Mr. Reeves, having ſent for from his ſtudy (his houſe being near) Biſhop Burnet's Hiſtory of his own Times, ſaid he would, by way of moderatorſhip in the preſent debate, read them a paſſage, to which he believed all parties would ſubſcribe: And then read what I will tranſcribe for you from the concluſion to that performance:

'I have often thought it a great error to waſte 'young gentlemen's years ſo long in learning Latin, 'by ſo tedious a grammar. I know thoſe who are 'bred to the profeſſion in literature, muſt have the 'Latin correctly; and for that the Rules of grammar 'are neceſſary: But theſe Rules are not at all requiſite 'to thoſe, who need only ſo much Latin, as thoroughly 'to underſtand and delight in the Roman authors and 'poets.

'But ſuppoſe a youth had, either for want of me-'mory, or of application, an incurable averſion to 'Latin, his Education is not for that to be deſpaired 'of: There is much noble knowlege to be had in 'the Engliſh and French Languages: Geography, 'Hiſtory, chiefly that of our own Country, the know-'lege of Nature, and the more *practical* parts of the 'Mathematicks (if he has not a genius for the *demon-'ſtrative*) may make a gentleman very knowing, tho' 'he has not a word of Latin' [And why, I would fain know, ſaid Mr. Reeves, not a gentlewoman?]. 'There is a fineneſs of thought, and a nobleneſs of ex-'preſſion, indeed, in the Latin authors' [This makes for your argument, Mr. Walden] 'that will make 'them the entertainment of a man's whole life, if he 'once underſtands and reads them with delight' [Very well, ſaid Mr. Walden!] 'But if this cannot be 'attained to, I would not have it reckoned that the 'Education of an ill Latin ſcholar is to be given 'over.'

Thus far the Biſhop.

We

We all know, proceeded Mr. Reeves, how well Mr. Locke has treated this ſubject. And he is ſo far from diſcouraging the fair Sex from learning Languages, that he gives us a method in his Treatiſe of Education, by which a Mother may not only learn Latin herſelf, but be able to teach it to her *Son*. Be not, therefore, Ladies, aſhamed either of your talents or acquirements. Only take care, you give not up any knowlege that is more laudable in your Sex, and more uſeful, for Learning; and then I am ſure, you will, you *muſt*, be the more agreeable, the more ſuitable companions for it, to men of ſenſe. Nor let any man have ſo narrow a mind as to be apprehenſive for his own prerogative, from a learned woman. A woman who does not behave the *better* the more ſhe knows, will make her huſband uneaſy, and will think as well of herſelf, were ſhe utterly illiterate; nor would any argument convince her of her duty. Do not men marry with their eyes open? And cannot they court whom they pleaſe? A conceited, a vain mind in a woman cannot be hidden. Upon the whole, I think it may be fairly concluded, that the more a woman knows, as well as a man, the wiſer ſhe will generally be; and the more regard ſhe will have for a man of ſenſe and learning.

Here ended Mr. Reeves.

Mr. Walden was ſilent; yet ſhrugged up his ſhoulders, and ſeemed unſatisfied.

The converſation then took a more general turn, in which every one bore a part. *Plays*, *Faſhion*, *Dreſs*, and the *Public Entertainments*, were the ſubjects.

Miſs Cantillon, who had till now ſat a little uneaſy, ſeemed reſolved to make up for her ſilence: But did not ſhine at all where ſhe thought herſelf moſt intitled to make a figure.

But Miſs Clements really ſhone. Yet in the eye of ſome people, what advantages has folly in a pretty woman, over even wiſdom in a plain one? Sir Hargrave was much more ſtruck with the pert things ſpoken without fear or wit, by Miſs Cantillon, than with the juſt obſervations that fell from the lips of Miſs Clements.

Mr. Walden made no great figure on theſe faſhionable ſubjects; no, not on that of the *Plays:* For he would needs force into converſation, with a preference to our Shakeſpeare, his Sophocles, his Euripides, his Terence; of the merits of whoſe performances, how great ſoever, no one preſent but Mr. Reeves and himſelf could judge, except by tranſlations.

Sir Hargrave ſpoke well on the ſubject of the reigning faſhions, and on modern dreſs, ſo much the foible of the preſent age.

Lady Betty and Mrs. Reeves ſpoke very properly of the decency of Dreſs, and propriety of Faſhions, as well as of Public Entertainments.

Miſs Clements put in here alſo with advantage to herſelf.

Nor would Mr. Walden be excluded this topic. But, as the obſervations he made on it, went no deeper than what it was preſumed he might have had at ſecond-hand, he made a worſe figure here, than he did on his more favourite ſubject. He was, however, heard, till he was for bringing in his Spartan Jacket (I forget what he called it) deſcending only to the knees of the women, in place of hoops; and the Roman Toga for the men.

Miſs Barnevelt broke in upon the Scholar; but by way of approbation of what he ſaid; and went on with ſubjects of heroiſm, without permitting him to rally and proceed, as he ſeemed inclined to do.

After praiſing what he ſaid of the Spartan and Roman dreſſes, ſhe fell to enumerating *her* heroes, both antient and modern. Achilles, the ſavage

Achilles,

Achilles, charmed her. Hector, however, was a good *clever* man: Yet ſhe could not bear to think of his being ſo mean as to intreat a favour, tho' of her heroic Achilles. He deſerved for it, ſhe ſaid, to have his corpſe dragged round the Trojan walls at the wheels of the victor's chariot. Alexander the Great was her dear creature; and Julius Cæſar was *a very pretty fellow*.

Theſe were Miſs Barnevelt's *antient* heroes.

Among the moderns, the great Scanderbeg, our Henry V. Henry IV. of France, Charles XII. of Sweden, and the great Czar Peter, who my Grandfather uſed to ſay was worth them all, were her favourites.

All this while honeſt Mr. Singleton had a ſmile at the ſervice of every ſpeaker, and a loud laugh always ready at the Baronet's.

Sir Hargrave ſeemed not a little pleaſed with the honeſt man's complaiſance; and always directed himſelf to *him*, when he was diſpoſed to be merry.

Laughing, you know, my dear, is almoſt as catching as gaping, be the ſubject ever ſo ſilly: And more than once he ſhewed by his eyes, that he could have devoured Miſs Cantillon for generally adding her affected Te-he (twiſting and bridling behind her fan) to his louder Hah, hah, hah, hah.

What a length have I run! How does this narrative Letter-writing, if one is to enter into minute and characteriſtic deſcriptions and converſations, draw one on!—I will leave off for the preſent: Yet have not quite diſmiſſed the company (tho' I have done with the argument) that I thought to have parted with before I concluded this Letter.

But I know I ſhall pleaſe my Uncle in the *livelier* parts of it, by the handle they will give him againſt his poor Niece. My Grandmother, and Aunt Selby, will be pleaſed, and ſo will *you*, my Lucy, with *all* I

write, for the writer's ſake: Such is their and your partial Love to

Their and your ever-grateful
HARRIET.

LETTER XIV.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

BY the time Tea was ready, Lady Betty whiſperingly congratulated me on having made ſo conſiderable a conqueſt, as ſhe was ſure I had, by Sir Hargrave's looks.

She took notice alſo of a gallant expreſſion of his, uttered, as ſhe would have it, with an earneſtneſs that gave it a meaning beyond a common compliment. My Couſin Reeves had aſked Miſs Clements if ſhe could commend to me an honeſt, modeſt man-ſervant? *I*, ſaid Sir Hargrave, *can*. I myſelf ſhall be proud to wear Miſs Byron's livery; and that for life.

Miſs Cantillon, who was within hearing of this, and had ſeemed to be highly taken with the Baronet, could hardly let her eyes be civil to me; and yet her really pretty mouth, *occaſionally*, work'd itſelf into forced ſmiles, and an affectation of complaiſance.

Sir Hargrave was extremely obſequious to me all the Tea-time; and ſeemed in *earneſt* a little uneaſy in himſelf: And after Tea he took my Couſin Reeves into the next room; and there made your Harriet the ſubject of a ſerious converſation; and deſired his intereſt with me.

He prefaced his declaration to Mr. Reeves, with aſſuring him, that he had ſought for an opportunity more than once, to be admitted into my company, when he was laſt at Northampton; and that he had not intruded himſelf then into this company, had he not heard I was to be there.

He

He made proteſtations of his honourable views; which looked as if he thought they might be doubted, if he had not given ſuch aſſurances. A tacit implication of an imagined ſuperiority, as well in conſequence as fortune.

Mr. Reeves told him, It was a rule which all my relations had ſet themſelves, not to interfere with my choice, let it be placed on whom it would.

Sir Hargrave called himſelf a *happy man* upon this intelligence.

He afterwards, on his return to company, found an opportunity, as Mrs. Reeves and I were talking at the further part of the room, in very vehement terms, to declare himſelf to me an admirer of perfections of his own creation; for he volubly enumerated many; and begged my permiſſion to pay his reſpects to me at Mr. Reeves's.

Mr. Reeves, Sir Hargrave, ſaid I, will receive what viſits he pleaſes in his own houſe. I have no permiſſion to give.

He bowed, and made me a very high compliment, taking what I ſaid for a permiſſion.

What, Lucy, can a woman do with theſe ſelf-flatterers?

Mr. Walden took his leave: Sir Hargrave his: He wanted, I ſaw, to ſpeak to me, at his departure; but I gave him no opportunity.

Mr. Singleton ſeemed alſo inclined to go, but knew not how; and having loſt the benefit of their example by his irreſolution, ſat down.

Lady Betty then repeated her congratulations. How many Ladies, ſaid ſhe, and fine Ladies too, have ſighed in ſecret for Sir Hargrave! You will have the glory, Miſs Byron, of fixing the wavering heart of a man who has done, and is capable of doing, a great deal of miſchief.

The Ladies, madam, ſaid I, who can ſigh in ſecret for ſuch a man as Sir Hargrave, muſt either deſerve a great deal of pity, or none at all.

Sir Hargrave, ſaid Miſs Cantillon, is a very fine gentleman; and ſo looked upon, I aſſure you: And he has a noble eſtate.

It is very happy, replied I, that we do not all of us like the ſame perſon. I mean not to diſparage Sir Hargrave; but I have compaſſion for the Ladies who ſigh for him in ſecret. One woman only can be his wife; and perhaps ſhe will not be one of thoſe who ſigh for him; eſpecially were he to know that ſhe does.

Perhaps not, replied Miſs Cantillon: But I do aſſure you, that *I* am not one of thoſe who ſigh for Sir Hargrave.

The Ladies ſmiled.

I am glad of it, madam, ſaid I. Every woman ſhould have her heart in her own keeping, till ſhe can find a worthy man to beſtow it upon.

Miſs Barnevelt took a tilt in heroics.

Well, Ladies, ſaid ſhe, you may talk of Love and Love as much as you pleaſe; but it is my glory, that I never knew what Love was. I, for my part, like a *brave* man, a *gallant* man: One in whoſe loud praiſe Fame has cracked half a dozen trumpets. But as to your milkſops, your dough-baked Lovers, who ſtay at home and ſtrut among the women, when glory is to be gained in the martial field; I deſpiſe them with all my heart. I have often wiſhed that the fooliſh heads of ſuch fellows as theſe were cut off in time of war, and ſent over to the heroes to fill their cannon with, when they batter in breach, by way of ſaving ball.

I am afraid, ſaid Lady Betty, humouring this romantic ſpeech, that if the heads of ſuch perſons were as ſoft as we are apt ſometimes to think them, they would be of as little ſervice abroad as they are at home.

O, madam, replied Miſs Barnevelt, there is a good deal of lead in the heads of theſe fellows. But were

were their brains, ſaid the ſhocking creature, if any they have, made to fly about the ears of an enemy, they would ſerve both to blind and terrify him.

Even Mr. Singleton was affected with this horrid ſpeech; for he clapt both his hands to his head, as if he were afraid of his brains.

Lady Betty was very urgent with us to paſs the evening with her; but we excuſed ourſelves; and when we were in the coach, Mr. Reeves told me, that I ſhould find the Baronet a very troubleſome and reſolute Lover, if I did not give him countenance.

And ſo Sir, ſaid I, you would have me do, as I have heard many a good woman *has* done, Marry a man, in order to get rid of his importunity.

And a certain cure too, let me tell you, Couſin, ſaid he, ſmiling.

We found at home, waiting for Mr. Reeves's return, Sir John Alleſtree: A worthy ſenſible man, of plain and unaffected manners, upwards of fifty.

Mr. Reeves mentioning to him our paſt entertainment and company, Sir John gave as ſuch an account of Sir Hargrave, as helped me not only in the character I have given of him, but let me know that he is a very dangerous and enterpriſing man. He ſays, that laughing and light as he is in company, he is malicious, ill-natured, and deſigning; and ſticks at nothing to carry a point on which he has once ſet his heart. He has ruined, Sir John ſays, three young creatures already under vows of marriage.

Sir John ſpoke of him as a managing man, as to his fortune: He ſaid, That though he would, at times, be laviſh in the purſuit of his pleaſures; yet that he had ſome narrowneſſes which made him deſpiſed, and that moſt by thoſe for whoſe regard a good man would principally wiſh; his neighbours and tenants.

Could you have thought, my Lucy, that this laughing, fine-dreſſing man, could have been a man of malice; of reſentment; of enterprize; a cruel man? Yet Sir John told two very bad ſtories of him, beſides what I have mentioned, which prove him to be all I have ſaid.

But I had no need of theſe ſtories to determine me againſt receiving his addreſſes. What I ſaw of him was ſufficient; though Sir John made no manner of doubt (on being told by Mr. Reeves, in confidence, of his application to him for leave to viſit me) that he was quite in earneſt; and, making me a compliment, added, that he knew Sir Hargrave was inclined to marry; and the more, as one half of his eſtate, on failure of iſſue male, would go at his death to a diſtant relation whom he hated; but for no other reaſon than for admoniſhing him, when a ſchool-boy, on his low and miſchievous pranks.

His eſtate, Sir John told my Couſin, is full as conſiderable as reported. And Mr. Reeves, after Sir John went away, ſaid, What a glory will it be to you, Couſin Byron, to reform ſuch a man, and make his great fortune a bleſſing to multitudes; as I am ſure would be your endeavour to do, were you Lady Pollexfen!

But, my Lucy, were Sir Hargrave king of one half of the globe, I would not go to the altar with him.

But if he be a very troubleſome man, what ſhall I ſay to him? I can deal pretty well with thoſe, who will be kept at arms length; but I own, I ſhould be very much perplexed with reſolute wretches. The civility I think myſelf obliged to pay every one who profeſſes a regard for me, might ſubject me to inconveniencies with violent ſpirits, which, protected as I have been by my Uncle Selby, and my good Mr. Deane, I never yet have known. O my Lucy, to what evils, but for that protection, might not I, a ſole, an independent young woman, have been expoſed? Since men,

men, many men, are to be looked upon as ſavages, as wild beaſts of the deſert; and a ſingle and independent woman they hunt after as their proper prey.

To have done with Sir Hargrave for the preſent, and I wiſh I may be able to ſay for ever; Early in the morning, a billet was brought from him to Mr. Reeves, excuſing himſelf from paying him a viſit that morning (as he had intended) by reaſon of the ſudden and deſperate illneſs of a relation, whoſe ſeat was near Reading, with whom he had large concerns, and who was deſirous to ſee him before he died. As it was impoſſible that he could return under three days, which, he ſaid, would appear as three years to him, and he was obliged to ſet out that moment; he could not diſpenſe with himſelf for putting in his *claim*, as he called it, to Miſs Byron's favour, and confirming his declaration of yeſterday. In very high ſtrains, he profeſſed himſelf her admirer; and begged Mr. and Mrs. Reeves's intereſt with her. One felicity, he ſaid, he hoped for from his abſence, which was, that as Miſs Byron, and Mr. and Mrs. Reeves, would have time to conſider of his offers; he preſumed to hope he ſhould not be ſubjected to a repulſe.

And now, my Lucy, you have before you as good an account as I can give you of my two new Lovers.

How I ſhall manage with them, I know not: But I begin to think that thoſe young women are happieſt, whoſe friends take all the trouble of this ſort upon *them*; only conſulting their daughters' inclinations as preliminaries are adjuſting.

My friends indeed pay a high compliment to my diſcretion, when they ſo generouſly allow me to judge for myſelf: And we young women are fond of being our own miſtreſſes: But I muſt ſay, that to *me* this

this compliment has been, and is, a painful one; for two reaſons; That I cannot but conſider their goodneſs as a taſk upon me, which requires my utmoſt circumſpection, as well as gratitude; and that they have ſhewn more generoſity in diſpenſing with their authority, than I have done whenever I have acted ſo as to appear, though *but* to appear, to accept of the diſpenſation: Let me add beſides, that now, when I find myſelf likely to be addreſſed to by mere ſtrangers, by men who grew not into my knowledge inſenſibly, as our neighbours Greville, Fenwick, and Orme, did, I cannot but think it has the appearance of confidence, to ſtand out to receive, as a creature uncontroulable, the firſt motions to an addreſs of this awful nature. Awful indeed might it be called, were one's heart to incline towards a particular perſon.

Allow me then for the future, my revered Grandmamma, and you, my beloved and equally honoured Uncle and Aunt Selby, allow me, to refer myſelf to you, if any perſon offers to whom I may happen to have no ſtrong objections. As to Mr. Fowler, and the Baronet, I muſt *now* do as well as I can with them. It is much eaſier for a young woman to ſay *No*, than *Yes*. But for the time to come I will not have the aſſurance to act for myſelf. I know your partiality for your Harriet too well, to doubt the merit of your recommendation.

As Mr. and Mrs. Reeves require me to ſhew them what I write, they are fond of indulging me in the employment: You will therefore be the leſs ſurprized that I write ſo much in ſo little a time. *Miſs Byron is in her Cloſet*; *Miſs Byron is writing;* is an excuſe ſufficient, they ſeem to think, to every-body, becauſe they allow it to be one to them: But beſides, I know they believe they oblige you all by the opportunity they ſo kindly give me of ſhewing my Duty and Love where ſo juſtly due.

I am,

I am, however, ſurpriſed at caſting my eye back Two ſheets! and ſuch a quantity before!—Unconſcionable, ſay; and let me, Echo-like, repeat,

Unconſcionable

HARRIET BYRON.

Sunday Night.

Letters from Northamptonſhire, by Farmer Jenkins! I kiſs the ſeals. What agreeable things, now, has my Lucy to ſay to her Harriet? Diſagreeable ones ſhe cannot write, if all my beloved friends are well.

LETTER XV.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

Monday, Feb. 6.

AND ſo my Uncle Selby, you tell me, is making obſervations in writting, on my Letters; and waits for nothing more to begin with me, than my concluſion of the converſations that offered at Lady Betty's.

And is it expected that I ſhould go on furniſhing weapons againſt myſelf?

It is.

Well; with all my heart. As long as I can contribute to his amuſement; as long as my Grandmamma is pleaſed and diverted with what I write, as well as with his pleaſantries on her girl; I will proceed.

Well, but will you not, my Harriet, methinks you aſk, write with leſs openneſs, with more reſerve, in apprehenſion of the rod which you know hangs over your head?

Indeed I will not. It is my glory, that I have not a thought in my heart which I would conceal from any one whom it imported to know it, and who would be

be gratified by the revealing of it. And yet I am a little chagrined at the wager which you tell me my Uncle has actually laid with my Grandmamma, that I ſhall not return from London with a ſound heart.

And does he teaze *you*, my Lucy, on this ſubject, with reminding you of your *young* partiality for Captain Duncan, in order to make good his aſſertion of the ſuſceptibility of us all?

Why ſo let him. And why ſhould you deny, that you *were* ſuſceptible of a natural paſſion? You muſt not be prudiſh, Lucy. If you are *not*, all his raillery will loſe its force.

What better aſſurance can I give to my Uncle, and to all my friends, that if I were caught, I would own it, than by adviſing you *not* to be aſhamed to confeſs a ſenſibility which is no diſgrace, when duty and prudence are our guides, and the object worthy?

Your man indeed was *not* worthy, as it proved; but he was a very ſpecious creature; and you knew not his bad character, when you ſuffered *Liking* to grow into *Love*.

But when the Love-fever was at the height, did you make any-body uneaſy with your paſſion? Did you run to the woods and groves, to record it on the barks of trees?—No!—You ſighed in ſilence indeed: But it was but for a little while. I got your ſecret from you; not, however, till it betrayed itſelf in your pined countenance; and then the man's diſcovered unworthineſs, and your own diſcretion, enabled you to conquer a paſſion to which you had given way, ſuppoſing it unconquerable, becauſe you thought it would coſt you pains to contend with it.

As to myſelf, you know I have hitherto been on my guard. I have been careful ever to ſhut the door of my heart againſt the blind deity, the moment I could imagine him ſetting his incroaching foot on the *threſh-*

hold,

hold, which I think *liking* may be called. Had he once gained entrance, perhaps I might have come off but ſimply.

But I hope I am in the leſs danger of falling in love with *any* man, as I can be civil and courteous to *all*. When a ſtream is ſluiced off into ſeveral channels, there is the leſs fear that it will overflow its banks. I really think I never ſhall be in love with any-body, till duty directs inclination.

Excuſe me, Lucy. I do now-and-then, you know, get into a boaſting humour. But then my puniſhment, as in moſt other caſes, follows my fault: My Uncle pulls me down, and ſhews me, that I am not half ſo good as the reſt of my friends think me.

You tell me, that Mr. Greville will be in London in a very few days. I can't help it. He pretends buſineſs, you ſay; and (ſince that calls him up) intends to give himſelf a month's pleaſure in town, and to take his ſhare of the public entertainments. Well, ſo let him. But I hope that I am not to be either his buſineſs or entertainment. After a civil neighbourly viſit, or ſo, I hope, I ſhall not be tormented with him.

What happened once betwixt Mr. Fenwick and him gave me pain enough; expoſed me enough, ſurely! A young woman, tho' without her own fault, made the occaſion of a rencounter between two men of fortune, muſt be talked of too much for her own liking, or ſhe muſt be a ſtrange creature. What numbers of people has the unhappy raſhneſs of thoſe two men brought to ſtare at me? And with what difficulty did my Uncle and Mr. Deane bring them into ſo odd a compromiſe, as they at laſt came into, to torment me, as I may call it, by joint conſent, notwithſtanding all I could ſay to them; which was the only probable way, ſhocking creatures! to prevent murder?

But, Lucy, what an odd thing is it in my Uncle, to take hold of what I ſaid in one of my Letters, that

that I had a good mind to give you a ſketch of what I might ſuppoſe the company at Lady Betty's would ſay of your Harriet, were each to write her character to their confidents or correſpondents, as ſhe has done theirs to you!

I think there is a little concealed malice in my Uncle's command: But I obey.

To begin then—Lady Betty, who owns ſhe thinks favourably of me, I will ſuppoſe would write to her Lucy, in ſuch terms as theſe: But ſhall I ſuppoſe every one to be ſo happy, as to have her Lucy?

'Miſs Byron, of whom you have heard Mr. Reeves 'talk ſo much, diſcredits not, in the *main*, the cha-'racter he has given her. We muſt allow a little, 'you know, for the fondneſs of relationſhip.

'The girl has had a good education, and owes all 'her advantages to it. But it is a country and bookiſh 'one: And that won't do *every*-thing for one of our 'Sex, if *any*-thing. Poor thing! She *never* was in 'town before!—But ſhe ſeems docile, and, for a coun-'try girl, is tolerably genteel: I think, therefore, I ſhall 'receive no diſcredit by introducing her into the Beau 'Monde.'

Miſs Clements, perhaps, agreeable to the goodneſs of her kind heart, would have written thus:

'Miſs Byron is an agreeable girl: She has invited 'me to viſit her; and I hope I ſhall like her better 'and better. She has, one may ſee, kept worthy 'perſons' company; and I dare ſay, will preſerve the 'improvement ſhe has gained by it. She is lively and 'obliging: She is young; not more than twenty; yet 'looks rather younger, by reaſon of a country bloom, 'which, however, miſbecomes her not; and gives 'a modeſty to her firſt appearance, that poſſeſſes one 'in her favour. What a caſt-away would Miſs Byron

'be,

'be if knowing ſo well, as ſhe ſeems to know what
'the duty of others is, ſhe would forget her own!'

Miſs Cantillon would perhaps thus write:

'There was Miſs Harriet Byron of Northampton-
'ſhire; a young woman in whoſe favour report has
'been very laviſh. I can't ſay that I think her ſo
'*very* extraordinary: Yet ſhe is well enough for a
'country girl. But tho' I do not impute to her a
'*very* pert look, yet if ſhe had not been ſet up for
'ſomething beyond what ſhe is, by all her friends,
'who, it ſeems, are *exceſſively* fond of her, ſhe might
'have had a more humble opinion of herſelf than ſhe
'ſeems to have when ſhe is ſet a talking. She may,
'indeed, make a figure in a country aſſembly; but in
'the London world ſhe muſt be not a little aukward,
'having never been here before.

'I take her to have a great deal of art. But to do
'her juſtice, ſhe has no bad complexion: That, you
'know, is a ſtriking advantage: But to me ſhe has
'a babyiſh look, eſpecially when ſhe ſmiles; yet I
'ſuppoſe ſhe has been told that her ſmiles become
'her; for ſhe is always ſmiling—So like a ſimpleton,
'I was going to ſay!

'Upon the whole, I ſee nothing ſo engaging in her
'as to have made her the idol ſhe is with every-body
'—And what little beauty ſhe has, it cannot laſt.
'For my part, where I a man, the clear Brunette—But
'you will think I am praiſing myſelf.'

Miſs Barnevelt would perhaps thus write to her Lucy—To *her* Lucy!—Upon my word I will not let her have a Lucy—She ſhall have a Brother *man* to write to, not a woman, and he ſhall have a fierce name.

We

We will ſuppoſe, that ſhe alſo had been deſcribing the reſt of the company:

'Well but, my dear Bombardino, I am now to give 'you a deſcription of Miſs Byron. 'Tis the ſofteſt, 'gentleſt, ſmiling rogue of a girl—I proteſt, I could 'five or ſix times have kiſſed her, for what ſhe ſaid, 'and for the manner ſhe ſpoke in—For ſhe has been 'uſed to prate; a favourite child in her own family, 'one may eaſily ſee that. Yet ſo *prettily* loth to ſpeak 'till ſpoken to!—Such a bluſhing little rogue!—'Tis 'a dear girl, and I wiſhed twenty times as I ſat by 'her, that I had been a man for her ſake. Upon my 'honour, Bombardino, I believe if I had, I ſhould 'have caught her up, popt her under one of my arms, 'and run away with her.'

Something like this, my Lucy, did Miſs Barnevelt once ſay.

Having now diſmiſſed the women, I come to Mr. Singleton, Mr. Walden, and Sir Hargrave.

Mr. Walden (himſelf a Paſquin) would thus perhaps have written to his Marforio:

'The firſt Lady, whom, as the greateſt ſtranger, 'I ſhall take upon me to deſcribe, is Miſs Harriet 'Byron of Northamptonſhire. In her perſon ſhe is 'not diſagreeable; and moſt people think her pretty. 'But, what is prettineſs? Why, nevertheleſs, in a 'woman, prettineſs is—*pretty*: What other word can 'I ſo fitly uſe of a perſon, who, tho' a little *ſightly*, 'cannot be called a Beauty?

'I will allow, that we men are not wrong in ad-'miring *modeſt* women for the graces of their *perſons*: 'But let them *be* modeſt; let them return the com-'pliment, and revere *Us* for our capaciouſneſs of 'mind:

'*mind:* And ſo they will, if they are brought up 'to know their own weakneſs, and that they are 'but domeſtic animals of a ſuperior order. Even 'ignorance, let me tell you, my Marſorio, is pretty 'in a woman. Humility is one of their princi-'pal graces. Women hardly ever ſet themſelves 'to acquire the knowlege that is proper to men, but 'they neglect for it, what more indiſpenſably be-'longs to women. To have them come to their 'Huſbands, to their Brothers, and even to their Lovers 'when they have a mind to know any-thing out of 'their way, and beg to be inſtructed and informed, 'inſpireth them with the becoming humility which I 'have touched upon, and giveth us importance with 'them.

'Indeed, my Marſario, there are very few topics 'that ariſe in converſation among men, upon which 'women ought to open their lips. Silence becomes 'them. Let them therefore hear, wonder, and im-'prove, in ſilence. They are naturally contentious, 'and lovers of contradiction' [Something like this Mr. Walden once threw out: And you know who, my Lucy—But I am afraid—has ſaid as much] 'and 'ſhall we qualify them to be diſputants againſt our-'ſelves?

'Theſe reflections, Marſorio, are not foreign to 'my ſubject. This girl, this Harriet Byron, is ap-'plauded for a young woman of reading and obſer-'vation. But there was another Lady preſent, Miſs 'Clements, who (if there be any merit to a *woman* 'in it) appeareth to me to excel her in the compaſs of 'her reading; and that upon the ſtrength of her own 'diligence and abilities; which is not the caſe with 'this Miſs Harriet; for ſhe, truly, hath had ſome 'pains taken with her by her late Grandfather, a man 'of erudition, who had his education among *us*. This 'old gentleman, I am told, took it into his head, 'having no Grandſon, to give this girl a *bookiſh* turn;

'but

'but he wiſely ſtopt at her mother-tongue; only giv-
'ing her a ſmattering in French and Italian.

'As I ſaw that the eyes of every one were upon her,
'I was willing to hear what ſhe had to ſay for herſelf.
'Poor girl! She will ſuffer, I doubt, for her ſpeciouſ-
'neſs. Yet I cannot ſay, all things conſidered, that
'ſhe was *very* malapert: That quality is yet to come.
'She is young.

'I therefore trifled a little with her: And went
'further than I generally chooſe to go with the reading
'ſpecies of women, in order to divert an inunda-
'tion of nonſenſe and foppery, breaking in from one
'of the company; Sir Hargrave Pollexfen: Of whom
'more anon.

'You know, Marſorio, that a man, when he is
'provoked to fight with an overgrown boy, hath
'every-body againſt him: So hath a Scholar who en-
'gageth on learned topics with a woman. The Sex
'muſt be flattered at the expence of truth. Many
'things are thought to be pretty from the mouth of a
'woman, which would be egregiouſly weak and ſilly
'proceeding from that of a man. His very eminence
'in learning, on ſuch a contention, would tend only
'to exalt her, and depreciate himſelf. As the girl
'was every-body's favourite, and as the Baronet
'ſeemed to eye her with particular regard, I ſpared
'her. A man would not, you know, ſpoil a girl's
'fortune.'

But how, Lucy, ſhall I be able to tell what I imagine Sir Hargrave would have written? Can I do it, if I place him in the light of a Lover, and not either undergo his character as ſuch, or incur the cenſure of vanity and conceit?

Well, but are you ſure, Harriet, methinks my Uncle aſks, that the Baronet is really and truly ſo egregiouſly ſmitten with you, as he pretended he was?

Why, ay! That's the thing, Sir!

You girls are ſo apt to take in earneſt the compliments made you by men!—

And ſo we are. But our credulity, my dear Sir, is a greater proof of *our* innocence, than men's profeſſions are of *their* ſincerity. So, let loſers ſpeak, and winners laugh.

But let him be in jeſt, if he will. In jeſt or in earneſt, Sir Hargrave muſt be extravagant, I ween, in Love-ſpeeches. And that I may not be thought wholly to decline this part of my taſk, I will ſuppoſe him profeſſing with Hudibras, after he has praiſed me beyond meaſure, for graces of his own creation;

The ſun ſhall now no more diſpenſe
His own, but Harriet's *influence.*
Where-e'er ſhe treads, her feet ſhall ſet
The primroſe and the violet:
All ſpices, perfumes, and ſweet powders,
Shall borrow from her breath their odours:
Worlds ſhall depend upon her eye,
And when ſhe frowns upon them, die.

And what if I make him addreſs me, by way of *apoſtrophe*, ſhall I ſay? (writing to his friend) in the following ſtrain?

My faith [my friend] *is* adamantine
As chains of deſtiny, I'll maintain;
True, as Apollo ever ſpoke,
Or oracle from heart of Oak:
Then ſhine upon me but benignly,
With that one, and that other pig ſnye;
The ſun and day ſhall ſooner part,
Then Love or you ſhake off my heart.

Well,

Well, but what, my Harriet, would honeſt Mr. Singleton have written, had he written about you?

Why thus, perhaps, my Lucy: and to his Grandmother; for ſhe is living.

'We had rare *fun* at dinner, and after dinner, my 'Grandmother.

'There was one Miſs *Barnevelt*, a fine tall *portly* yo ung Lady.

'There was Miſs *Clements*, not handſome, but very 'learned, and who, as was eaſy to perceive, could 'hold a *good argument*, on occaſion.

'There was Miſs *Cantillon*: as pretty a young Lady 'as one would wiſh to behold in a *ſummer's day*.

'And there was one Miſs *Byron*, a Northampton-'ſhire Lady, whom I never ſaw before.

'There was Mr. *Walden*, a moſt famous Scholar. 'I thought him very entertaining; for he talked of 'Learning, and ſuch-like things; which I know not 'ſo much of as I wiſh I did; becauſe my want of 'knowing a little *Latin* and *Greek* has made my un-'derſtanding *look leſs* than other men's. O my Grand-'mother! what a *wiſe man* would the being able to 'talk Latin and Greek have made me! And yet I 'thought that now-and-then Mr. Walden made too 'great a *fuſs* about *his*.

'But there was a rich and noble Baronet; richer 'than *me*, as they ſay, a great deal; Sir *Hargrove* '*Pollexfun*, if I ſpell his name right. A charming 'man! and charmingly dreſſed! and ſo many fine 'things he ſaid, and was ſo merry, and ſo facetious, 'that he did nothing but laugh, *as a man may ſay!* 'And I was as merry as *him* to the full. Why not?

'O my Grandmother! What with the talk of the 'young country Lady, that ſame Miſs Byron; for 'they put her upon talking a great deal; what with 'the famous Scholar; who, however, being a learned

'man

'man, could not be ſo merry as us; what with Sir 'Hargrave (I could live and die with Sir Hargrave: 'You never knew, my Grandmother, ſuch a bright 'man as Sir Hargrave), and what with one thing, and 'what with another, we *boxed it about*, and had rare '*fun*, as I told you—So that when I got home, and 'went to bed, I did nothing but dream of being in 'the ſame company, and three or four times waked 'myſelf with laughing.'

There, Lucy!—Will this do for Mr. Singleton? It is not much out of character, I aſſure you.

Monday Afternoon.

THIS Knight, this Sir Rowland Meredith!—He is below, it ſeems; his Nephew in his hand; Sir Rowland, my Sally tells me, in his gold button and button-hole coat, and full-buckled wig; Mr. Fowler as ſpruce as a Bridegroom.—What ſhall I do with Sir Rowland?

I ſhall be ſorry to diſpleaſe the good old man; yet how can I avoid it?

Expect another Letter next poſt: And ſo you will, if I did not bid you; for have I miſſed one yet?

Adieu, my Lucy.

H. B.

LETTER XVI.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Monday Night, } *Feb.* 6 & 7.
Tueſday Morn, }

SIR Rowland and his Nephew, tea being not quite ready, ſat down with my Couſins; and the Knight, leaving Mr. Fowler little to ſay, expatiated ſo handſomely on his Nephew's good qualities, and great paſſion for me, and on what he himſelf propoſed to

do for him in addition to his own fortune, that my Couſins, knowing I liked not the gentlemen in our own neighbourhood, and thought very indifferently of Sir Hargrave, were more than half inclined to promote the addreſſes of Mr. Fowler; and gave them both room to think ſo.

This favourable diſpoſition ſet the two gentlemen up. They were impatient for tea, that they might ſee me.

By the time I had ſealed up my Letters, word was brought me that tea was ready; and I went down.

The Knight, it ſeems, as ſoon as they heard me coming, jogged Mr. Fowler.—Nephew, ſaid he, pointing to the door, ſee what you can ſay to the Primroſe of your heart!—This is now the Primroſe ſeaſon with us in Caermarthen, Mr Reeves.

Mr. Fowler, by a ſtretch of complaiſance, came to meet and introduce me to the company, tho' at home. The Knight nodded his head after him, ſmiling; as if he had ſaid, Let my Nephew alone to gallant the Lady to her ſeat.

I was a little ſurpriſed at Mr. Fowler's approaching me the moment I appeared, and with his taking my hand, and conducting me to my ſeat, with an air; not knowing how much he had been raiſed by the converſation that had paſſed before.

He bowed. I courteſied, and looked a little ſillier than ordinary, I believe.

Your ſervant, young Lady, ſaid the Knight. Lovelier, and lovelier, by mercy! How theſe bluſhes become that ſweet face!—But, forgive me, madam, it is not my intent to daſh you.

Writing, Miſs Byron, all day! ſaid Mrs. Reeves. We have greatly miſſed you.

My Couſin ſeemed to ſay this, on purpoſe to give me time to recover myſelf.

I have blotted ſeveral ſheets of paper, ſaid I, and had juſt concluded.

I hope,

I hope, madam, ſaid the Knight, leaning forward his whole body, and peering in my face under his bent brows, that *we* have not been the cauſe of ha tening you down.

I ſtared. But as he ſeemed not to mean any-thing, I would not help him to a meaning by my own over-quickneſs.

Mr. Fowler had done an extraordinary thing, and ſat down, hemmed, and ſaid nothing; looking however, as if he was at a loſs to know whether he or his Uncle was expected to ſpeak.

The cold weather was then the ſubject; and the two gentlemen rubbed their hands, and drew nearer the fire, as if they were the colder for talking of it. Many hems paſſed between them, now the Uncle looking on the nephew, now the Nephew on the Uncle: At laſt they fell into talk of their new-built houſe at Caermarthen, and the furniſhing of it.

They mentioned afterwards their genteel neighbourhood, and gave the characters of half-a-dozen people, of whom none preſent but themſelves ever heard; but all tending to ſhew how much they were valued by the beſt gentry in Caermarthenſhire.

The Knight then related a converſation that had once paſſed between himſelf and the late Lord Manſfell, in which that Nobleman had complimented him on an eſtate of a clear 3000*l.* a-year, beſides a good deal of ready caſh, and with ſuppoſing that he would ſet up his Nephew when at age (for it was ſome years ago) as a repreſentative for the county. And he repeated the *prudent* anſwer he gave his Lordſhip, diſavowing ſuch a deſign, as no better than a gaming *propenſity*, as he called it, which had ruined many a fair eſtate.

This ſort of talk, in which his Nephew *could* bear a part (and indeed they had it all between them) held the tea-time; and then having given themſelves the

conſequence they had ſeemed to intend, the Knight, drawing his chair nearer to me, and winking to his Nephew, who withdrew, began to ſet forth to me the young gentleman's good qualities; to declare the paſſion he had for me; and to beg my encouragement of ſo worthy, ſo *proper*, and ſo *well-favoured* a young man; who was to be his ſole heir; and for whom he would do ſuch things, on my account, as, during his life, he would not do for any other woman *breathing*.

There was no anſwering a diſcourſe ſo ſerious with the air of levity which it was hardly poſſible to avoid aſſuming on the firſt viſit of the Knight.

I was vexed that I found myſelf almoſt as baſhful, as ſilly, and as ſilent, as if I had thoughts of encouraging Mr. Fowler's addreſſes. My Couſins ſeemed pleaſed with my baſhfulneſs. The Knight I once thought, by the tone of his voice, and his hum, would have ſtruck up a Welſh tune, and danced for joy.

Shall I call in my Kinſman, madam, to confirm all I have ſaid, and to pour out his whole ſoul at your feet? My boy is baſhful: But a little favour from that ſweet countenance will make a man of him. Let me, let me, call in my boy. I will go for him myſelf; and was going.

Let me ſay one word, Sir Rowland—before Mr. Fowler comes in—before you ſpeak to him—You have explained yourſelf unexceptionably. I am obliged to you and Mr. Fowler for your good opinion: But this can never be.

How, madam! Can *never* be!—I will allow that you ſhall take time for half-a-dozen viſits, or ſo, that you may be able to judge of my Nephew's qualities and underſtanding, and be convinced from his own mouth, and heart, and ſoul, as I may ſay, of his Love for you. No need of time for *him*. He, poor man! is fixed, immoveably fixed: But ſay you will take a week's time, or ſo, to conſider what you *can* do, what you *will* do—And that's all I at preſent crave, or indeed, madam, can *allow* you.

I

I cannot doubt *now*, Sir Rowland, of what my mind will be a week hence, as to this matter.

How, madam!—Why we are all in the *ſuds*, then!—Why, Mr Reeves, Mrs. Reeves! Whew! with a half-whiſtle—Why, madam, we ſhall, at this rate, be all *untwiſted!*—But (after a pauſe) by Mercy I will not be thus anſwered!—Why, madam, would you have the conſcience to break my poor boy's heart?—Come, be as gracious as you look to be—Give me your hand—[He ſnatched my hand. In reſpect to his years I withdrew it not] And give my boy your heart.—Sweet ſoul! Such ſenſible, ſuch good-natured mantlings!—Why you can't be cruel, if you would!—Dear Lady! Say you will take a little time to conſider of this matter. Don't repeat thoſe cruel words, "It "can never be."—What have you to object to my boy?

Mr. Fowler, both by character and appearance, Sir Rowland, is a worthy man. He is a modeſt man; and modeſty—

Well, and ſo he is—Mercy! I was afraid that his modeſty would be an objection—

It cannot, Sir Rowland, with a modeſt woman. I love, I revere, a modeſt man: But, indeed, I cannot *give* hope, where I mean not to *encourage* any.

Your objection, madam, to my nephew?—You muſt have ſeen ſomething in him you diſlike.

I do not eaſily *diſ-like*, Sir; but then I do not eaſily *like:* And I never will marry any man, to whom I cannot be more than indifferent.

Why, madam, he adores you—He—

That, Sir, is an objection, unleſs I could return his Love. My gratitude would be endangered.

Excellent notions!—With theſe notions, madam, you could not be ungrateful.

That, Sir, is a riſque I will never run. How many bad wives are there, who would have been good ones, had they not married either to their diſlike, or with

indifference? Good beginnings, Sir Rowland, are neceſſary to good progreſſes, and to happy concluſions,

Why ſo they are. But beginnings that are *not* bad, with good people, will make no *bad* progreſſes, no *bad* concluſions.

No bad is not *good*, Sir Rowland; and in ſuch a world as this, ſhall people lay themſelves open to the danger of acting contrary to their duty? Shall they ſuffer themſelves to be bribed, either by conveniencies, or ſuperfluities, to give their hands, and leave their hearts doubtful or indifferent? It would not be honeſt to do ſo.

You told me, madam, the firſt time I had the honour to ſee you, that you were abſolutely and *bonâ fide* diſengaged—

I told you truth, Sir.

Then, madam, we will *not* take your denial. We will perſevere. We will *not* be diſcouraged! What a *deuce!* Have I not heard it ſaid, that *faint heart never won fair Lady?*

I never would give an abſolute denial, Sir, were I to have the leaſt doubt of my mind. If I could balance, I would conſult my friends, and refer to them; and their opinion ſhould have due weight with me. But for your *Nephew's* ſake, Sir Rowland, while his eſteem for me is young and conquerable, urge not this matter farther. I would not give pain to a worthy heart.

As I hope for mercy, madam, ſo well do I like your notions, that if you will be my Niece, and let me but converſe with you once a day, I will be content with 100*l.* a-year, and ſettle upon you all I have in the world.

His eyes gliſtened; his face glowed; an honeſt earneſtneſs appeared in his countenance.

Generous man! Good Sir Rowland! ſaid I. I was affected. I was forced to withdraw.

I ſoon returned, and found Sir Rowland, his handkerchief

kerchief in his hand, applying very earneſtly to my Couſins: And they were ſo much affected too, that on his reſuming the ſubject to me, they could not help putting in a word or two on his ſide of the queſtion.

Sir Rowland then propoſed to call in his Nephew, that he might ſpeak for himſelf. My boy may be over-awed by Love, madam: True Love is always fearful: Yet he is no milkſop, I do aſſure you. To *men* he has courage. How he will behave to *you*, madam, I know not; for, really, notwithſtanding that ſweetneſs of aſpect, which I ſhould have thought would have led one to ſay what one would to you (in modeſty I mean) I have a kind of I-cannot-tell-what for you myſelf. Reverence it is not neither, I think—I only reverence my Maker—And yet I believe it is. Why, madam, your face is one of God Almighty's wonders in a little compaſs!—Pardon me—You may bluſh—But *be* gracious now!—Don't ſhew us, that, with a face ſo encouragingly tender, you have a hard heart.

O Sir Rowland, you are an excellent advocate: But pray tell Mr. Fowler—

I will call him in—And was riſing.

No, don't. But tell Mr. Fowler, that I regard him on a double account; for his own worth's ſake, and for his Uncle's: But ſubject me not, I once more entreat you, to the pain of repulſing a worthy man. I repeat, that I am under obligation to him for the value he has for me: I ſhall be under more, if he will accept of my thanks as all I have to return.

My dear Miſs Byron, ſaid Mr. Reeves, oblige Sir Rowland ſo far, as to take a little time to conſider—

God bleſs you on earth and in heaven, Mr. Reeves, for this! You are a good man—Why, ay, take a little time to conſider—God bleſs you, madam, take a little time. Say you will conſider. You know not what a man of underſtanding my Nephew is. Why,

madam, modeſt as he is, and awed by his Love for you, he cannot ſhew half the good ſenſe he is maſter of.

Modeſt men muſt have merit, Sir. But how can you, Mr. Reeves, make a difficult taſk more difficult? And yet all is from the goodneſs of your heart. You ſee Sir Rowland thinks me cruel: I have no cruelty in my nature. I love to oblige. I wiſh to match *you* in generoſity, Sir Rowland.—Aſk me for any-thing but *myſelf*, and I will endeavour to oblige you.

Admirable, by mercy! Why every-thing you ſay, inſtead of making me deſiſt, induces me to perſevere. There is no yielding up ſuch a prize, if one can obtain it. Tell me, Mr. Reeves, where there is ſuch another woman to be had, and we may give up Miſs Byron: But I hope ſhe will conſider of it.—Pray, madam—But I will call in my Nephew. And out he went in haſte, as if he were afraid of being again forbidden.

Mean time my Couſins put it to me—But before I could anſwer them, the Knight, followed by his Nephew, returned.

Mr. Fowler entered, bowing in the moſt reſpectful manner. He looked much more dejected than when he approached me at my firſt coming down. His Uncle had given him a hint of what had paſſed between us.

Mr. Fowler and I had but juſt ſat down, when the Knight ſaid to Mr. Reeves (but took him not by the button, as in his firſt viſit) one word with you, Sir—Mr. Reeves, one word with you, if you pleaſe.

They withdrew together; and preſently after Mrs. Reeves went out at the other door; and I was left alone with Mr. Fowler.

We both ſat ſilent for about three or four minutes. I thought I ought not to begin; Mr. Fowler knew not how. He drew his chair nearer to me; then ſat a little farther off; then drew it nearer again; ſtroked his ruffles, and hemmed two or three times; and at laſt, You cannot, madam, but obſerve my confuſion, my concern,

concern, my, my, my confuſion!—It is all owning to my reverence, my reſpect, my *reverence*, for you—hem!—He gave two gentle hems, and was ſilent.

I could not enjoy the modeſt man's awkwardneſs.—Every feature of his face working, his hands and his knees trembling, and his tongue faltering, how barbarous had I been, if I could.—O Lucy, what a diſqualifier is Love, if ſuch agitations as theſe are the natural effects of *that* paſſion!

Sir Rowland has been acquainting me, Sir, ſaid I, with the good opinion you have of me. I am very much obliged to you for it. I have been telling Sir Rowland—

Ah, madam! Say not what you have been telling Sir Rowland: He has hinted it to me. I muſt indeed confeſs my unworthineſs; yet I cannot forbear aſpireing to your favour. Who that knows what will make him the happieſt of men, however unworthy he may be, can forbear ſeeking his happineſs? I can only ſay, I am the moſt miſerable of men, if—

Good Mr. Fowler, interrupted I, indulge not a hope that cannot be anſwered. I will not pretend to ſay, that I ſhould not merit your eſteem, if I could return it; becauſe, to whomſoever I ſhould give my hand, I would make it a point of duty to deſerve his affection: But for that very reaſon, and that I may have no temptation to do otherwiſe, I muſt be convinced in my own mind that there is not a man in the world whom I could value more than him I choſe.

He ſighed. I was *aſſured*, madam, ſaid he, that your heart was abſolutely diſengaged: On that aſſurance I founded my preſumptuous hope.

And ſo it is, Mr. Fowler. I have never yet ſeen a man whom I could wiſh to marry.

Then, madam, may I not hope, that time that my aſſiduities, that my profound reverence, my unbounded Love—

O Mr. Fowler, think me not either inſenſible or

ungrateful. But time, I am ſure, can make no alteration in this caſe. I can only eſteem *you*, and that from a motive which I think has ſelfiſhneſs in it, becauſe you have ſhewn a regard for *me*.

No ſelfiſhneſs in this motive, madam; it is amiable gratitude. And if all the ſervices of my life, if all the adoration—

I have a very indifferent notion of ſudden impreſſions, Mr. Fowler: But I will not queſtion the ſincerity of a man I think ſo worthy. Sir Rowland has been very urgent with me. He has wiſhed me to take time to conſider. I have told him I *would*, if I could doubt: But that I cannot. For *your own* ſake therefore, let me entreat you to place your affections elſewhere. And may you place them happily!

You have, madam, I am afraid, ſeen men whom you could prefer to me—

Our acquaintance, Mr. Fowler, is very ſhort. It would be no wonder if I had. Yet I told you truly, that I never yet ſaw a man whom I could wiſh to marry.

He looked down, and ſighed.

But, Mr. Fowler, to be ſtill more frank and explicit with you, as I think you a very worthy man; I will own, that were any of the gentlemen I have hitherto known, to be my lot, it muſt be, I think, in compaſſion (in *gratitude*, I had almoſt ſaid) one (who nevertheleſs it cannot be) who has profeſſed a love for me ever ſince I was a child. A man of honour, of virtue, of modeſty; ſuch a man as I believe Mr. Fowler is. His fortune indeed is not ſo conſiderable as Sir Rowland ſays yours will be: But, Sir, as there is no other reaſon on the compariſon, why I ſhould prefer Mr. Fowler to him, I ſhould think the worſe of myſelf as long as I lived, if I gave a preference over ſuch a tried affection to fortune only. And now, Sir, I expect that you will make a generous uſe of my frankneſs, leſt the gentleman, if you ſhould know him,

may hear of it. And this I requeſt for *his ſake*, as I think I never can be his; as for *yours* I have been thus explicit.

I can only ſay, that I am the moſt miſerable of men! —But will you, madam, give me leave to viſit Mr. Reeves now-and-then?

Not on my account, Mr. Fowler. Underſtand it ſo; and if you ſee me, let it be with indifference, and without expectation from me; and I ſhall always behave myſelf to you, as to a man who has obliged me by his good opinion.

He bowed: Sat in ſilence: Pulled out his handkerchief.—I pitied him.

But let me aſk all you, my friends, who love Mr. Orme, Was I wrong? I think I never could love Mr. Fowler, as a wife ought to love her huſband—May he meet with a worthy woman who can! And ſurely ſo good, ſo modeſt a man, and of ſuch an ample fortune, eaſily may: While it may be my lot, if ever I marry, to be the wife of a man, with whom I may not be ſo happy, as either Mr. Orme or Mr. Fowler would probably make me, could I prevail upon myſelf to be the wife of either.—O my Uncle! often do I reflect on your mercer's ſhop.

Mr. Fowler aroſe, and walked diſconſolately about the room, and often profoundly, and, I believe [*not* Greville-like) ſincerely ſighed. His motion ſoon brought in the Knight and Mr. Reeves at one door, and Mrs. Reeves at the other.

Well! What news? What news?—Good, I hope, ſaid the Knight, with ſpread hands—Ah my poor boy! Thus a-la-mort! Surely, madam—

There he ſtopt, and looked wiſtfully at me; then at my Couſins—Mr. Reeves, Mrs. Reeves, ſpeak a good word for my boy. The heart that belongs to that countenance cannot be adamant ſurely.—Dear young Lady, let your power be equalled by your mercy.

Mr. Fowler, Sir Rowland, has too much generoſity

to upbraid me, I dare ſay. Nor will you think me either perverſe or ungenerous, when he tells you what has paſſed between us.

Have you given him hope, then? God grant it, though but diſtant hope! Have you ſaid you will conſider—Dear, bleſſed Lady!—

O Sir, interrupted I, how good you are to your Nephew! How worthily is your love placed on him! What a proof is it of *his* merit, and of the goodneſs of *your* heart!—I ſhall always have an eſteem for you both!—Your excuſe, Sir Rowland: Yours, Mr. Fowler. Be ſo good as to allow me to withdraw.

I retired to my own apartment, and throwing myſelf into a chair, reflected on what had paſſed; and after a while recollected myſelf to begin to write it down for you.

As ſoon as I had withdrawn, Mr. Fowler with a ſorrowful heart, as my Couſins told me, related all that I had ſaid to him.

Mr. Reeves was ſo good as to praiſe me for what he called my generoſity to Mr. Orme, as well as for my frankneſs and civility to Mr. Fowler.

That was the deuce of it, Sir Rowland ſaid, that were they to have no remedy, they could not find any fault in me to comfort themſelves with.

They put it over and over to my Couſin, Whether time and aſſiduity might not prevail with me to change my mind? And whether an application to my friends in the country might not, on ſetting every-thing fairly before them, be of ſervice? But Mr. Reeves told them, that now I had opened ſo freely my mind, and had ſpoken ſo unexpectedly, yet ſo gratefully, in favour of Mr. Orme, he feared there could be no hopes.

However, both gentlemen, at taking leave, recommended themſelves to Mr. and Mrs. Reeves for their intereſts; and the Knight vowed that I ſhould not come off ſo eaſily.

So

So much, and adieu, my Lucy, for the addreſſes of worthy Mr. Fowler. Pray, however, for your Harriet, that ſhe may not draw a worſe lot.

Tueſday Morning.

AT a private concert laſt night with my couſins and Miſs Clements; and again to be at a play this night; I ſhall be a racketer, I doubt.

Mr. Fowler called here this morning. Mrs. Reeves and I were out on a viſit. But Mr. Reeves was at home, and they had a good deal of diſcourſe about me. The worthy man ſpoke ſo deſpairingly of his ſucceſs with me, that I hope, for his own ſake, I ſhall hear no more of his addreſſes; and with the more reaſon, as Sir Rowland will in a few days ſet out for Caermarthen.

Sir Rowland called afterwards: But Mr. Reeves was abroad; and Mrs. Reeves and I were gone to Ludgate-hill, to buy a gown, which is to be made up in all haſte, that I may the more faſhionably attend Lady Betty Williams to ſome of the public entertainments. I have been very extravagant: But it is partly my couſin's fault. I ſend you incloſed a pattern of my ſilk. I thought we were high in the faſhion in Northamptonſhire; but all my cloaths are altering, that I may not *look frightful*, as the phraſe is.

But ſhall I as eaſily get rid of the Baronet, think you, as I hope I have of Mr. Fowler? He is come to town, and by his own invitation (in a card to Mr. Reeves) is to be here to-morrow afternoon. What ſignifies my getting out of the way? He will ſee me at another time; and I ſhall increaſe my own difficulties and his conſequence, if he thinks I am afraid of him.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

Wedneſday Night.

SIR Hargrave came before ſix o'clock. He was richly dreſſed. He aſked for my couſin Reeves. I was in my cloſet, writing. He was not likely to be the better received for the character Sir John Alleſtree gave of him.

He excuſed himſelf for coming ſo early, on the ſcore of his impatience, and that he might have a little diſcourſe with them, if I ſhould be engaged, before tea-time.

Was I within?—I was.—Thank heaven!—I was very good.

So he ſeemed to imagine that I was at home, in compliment to him.

Shall I give you, from my couſins, an account of the converſation before I went down? You know Mrs. Reeves is a nice obſerver.

He had had, he told my couſins, a moſt uneaſy time of it, ever ſince he ſaw me. The devil fetch him, if he had had one hour's reſt. He never ſaw a woman before whom he could love as he loved me. By his ſoul, he had no view, but what was ſtrictly honourable.

He ſometimes ſat down, ſometimes walked about the room, ſtrutting, and now-and-then adjuſting ſomething in his dreſs that nobody elſe ſaw wanted it. He gloried in the happy proſpects before him: Not but he knew I had a little *army* of admirers: But as none of them had met with encouragement from me, he hoped there was room for him to flatter himſelf that *he* might be the happy man.

I told you, Mr. Reeves, ſaid he, that I will give you *carte blanche* as to ſettlements. What I do for

ſo

ſo prudent a woman, will be doing for myſelf. I am not uſed, Mr. Reeves, to boaſt of my *fortune* [Then, it ſeems, he went up to the glaſs, as if his *perſon* could not fail of being an *additional* recommendation;] but I will lay before you, or before any of Miſs Byron's friends (Mr. Deane, if ſhe pleaſes—) my rent-rolls. There never was a better-conditioned eſtate. She ſhall live in town, or in the country, as ſhe thinks fit; and in the latter, at which of my ſeats ſhe pleaſes. I know I ſhall have no will but hers. I doubt not *your* friendſhip, Mr. Reeves. I hope for *yours*, madam. I ſhall have great pleaſure in the alliance I have in view, with every individual of your family —As if he would ſatisfy them of his friendſhip, in the near relation, as the only matter that could bear a doubt.

Then he ran on upon the part I bore in the converſation at Lady Betty Williams's—By his ſoul, *only* the wiſeſt, the wittieſt, the moſt gracefully modeſt of women—*that was all*—Then Ha, ha, ha, hah, poor Walden! What a ſilly fellow! He had *caught a Tartar!*—Ha, ha, ha, hah—Shaking his head and his gay ſides: Devil take him if he ever ſaw a *Prig* ſo fairly taken in!—but I was a ſly little rogue!—He ſaw that!—By all that's good, I muſt myſelf *ſing ſmall* in *her* company!—I will never meet at hard-edge with her—If I did—(and yet I have been thought to carry a good one) I ſhould be confoundedly gapped, *I can ſee that.* But, continued he, as a woman is more a huſband's than a man is a wife's [Have all the men this prerogative-notion, Lucy? You know it is a better man's] I ſhall have a pride worth boaſting of, if I can call ſuch a Jewel mine. Poor Walden!—Rot the fellow!—I warrant he would not have ſo knowing a wife for the world.—Ha, ha, ha, hah! He

is right: It is certainly right for ſuch narrow pedants to be afraid of Learned women!—Methinks, I ſee the fellow, conjurer like, circumſcribed in a narrow circle, putting into Greek what was better expreſſed in Engliſh; and forbidding every one's approach within the diſtance of his wand! Hah, hah, hah!—Let me die, if I ever ſaw a tragi-comical fellow better handled!—Then the faces he made—Did you ever, Mr. Reeves, ſee in your life, ſuch a parcel of diſaſtrous faces made by one man?

Thus did Sir Hargrave, laughingly, run on: Nor left he hardly any-thing for my couſins to ſay, or to do, but to laugh *with* him, and to ſmile *at* him.

On a meſſage that tea was near ready, I went down. On my entering the room, he addreſſed me with an air of kindneſs and freedom: Charming Miſs Byron! ſaid he, I hope your are all benignity and compaſſion. You know not what I have ſuffered ſince I had the honour to ſee you laſt; bowing very low; then rearing himſelf up, holding back his head; and ſeemed the taller for having bowed.

Handſome fop! thought I to myſelf. I took my ſeat; and endeavoured to look eaſy and free, as uſual; finding ſomething to ſay to my couſins, and to him. He begged that tea might be poſtponed for half an hour; and that, before the ſervants were admitted, I would hear him relate the ſubſtance of the converſation that had paſſed between him and Mr. and Mrs. Reeves.

Had not Sir Hargrave intended me an honour, and had he not a very high opinion of the efficacy of eight thouſand pounds a-year in an addreſs of this kind, I dare ſay, he would have ſuppoſed a little more prefacing neceſſary: But, after he had told me, in a few words, how much he was attracted by my character before he ſaw me, he thought fit directly to refer himſelf to the declaration he had made at Lady Betty Williams's

liams's, both to Mr. Reeves and myſelf; and then talked of large ſettlements; boaſted of his violent paſſions; and beſought my favour with the utmoſt earneſtneſs.

I would have played a little female trifling upon him, and affected to take his profeſſions only for polite raillery, which men call *making love* to young women, who perhaps are frequently but too willing to take in earneſt what the wretches mean but in jeſt; but the fervour with which he *renewed* (as he called it) his declarations, admitted not of fooling; and yet his *volubility* might have made queſtionable the ſincerity of his declarations. As therefore I could not think of encouraging his addreſſes, I thought it beſt to anſwer him with openneſs and unreſerve.

To ſeem to queſtion the ſincerity of ſuch profeſſions as you make, Sir Hargrave, might appear to you as if I wanted to be aſſured: But be pleaſed to know that you are directing your diſcourſe to one of the plaineſt-hearted women in England; and you may therefore expect from me nothing but the ſimpleſt truth. I thank you, Sir, for your good opinion of me; but I cannot encourage your addreſſes.

You *cannot*, madam, *encourage my addreſſes!* And expreſs yourſelf ſo ſeriouſly! Good heaven! [He ſtood ſilent a minute or two, looking upon me, and upon himſelf; as if he had ſaid, Fooliſh girl! knows ſhe whom ſhe refuſes?] I have been aſſured, madam, recovering a little from his ſurprize, that your affections are not engaged. But ſurely it muſt be a miſtake: Some happy man—

Is it, interrupted I, a neceſſary conſequence, that the woman who cannot receive the addreſſes of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, muſt be engaged?

Why, madam—As to that—I know not what to ſay—But a man of my fortune, and I hope, not *abſolutely* diſagreeable either in perſon or temper; of *ſome* rank in life—He pauſed; then reſuming—What, madam,

madam, if you are as much in earneſt as you ſeem, can be your objection? Be ſo good as to name it, that I may know, whether I cannot be ſo happy as to get over it?

We do not, we *cannot*, all like the ſame perſon. Women, I have heard ſay, are very capricious. Perhaps I am ſo. But there is a *ſomething* (we cannot always ſay what) that attracts or diſguſts us.

Diſguſts! madam---*Diſguſts!* Miſs Byron.

I ſpoke in general, Sir: I dare ſay, nineteen women out of twenty would think themſelves favoured in the addreſſes of Sir Hargrave Pollexſen.

But *you*, madam, are the twentieth that I muſt love: And be ſo good as to let me know—

Pray, Sir, aſk me not a reaſon for a *peculiarity*. Do you not yourſelf ſhew a peculiarity in making me the twentieth?

Your merit, madam—

It would be vanity in me, Sir, interrupted I, to allow a force to that plea. You, Sir, may have more merit, than perhaps the man I may happen to approve of better; but—*ſhall* I ſay? (Pardon me, Sir) You do not—You do not (heſitating)—hit my fancy—Pardon me, Sir.

If pardon depends upon *my* breath, let me die if I *do!---Not hit your fancy*, madam! [And then he looked upon himſelf all around] *Not hit your fancy*, madam!

I told you, Sir, that you muſt not expect any-thing from me but the ſimpleſt truth. You do me honour by your good opinion; and if my own heart were not, in this caſe, a very determined one, I would anſwer you with more politeneſs. But, Sir, on ſuch an occaſion as this, I think it would not be honourable, it would not be juſt, to keep a man in an hour's ſuſpenſe, when I am in none myſelf.

And are you then (angrily) ſo determined, Miſs Byron?

I am, Sir.

Confound me!—And yet I am enough confounded! —But I will not take an anſwer ſo contrary to my hopes. Tell me, madam, by the ſincerity which you boaſt; Are you not engaged in your affections? Is there not ſome one happy man, whom you prefer to all men?

I am a free perſon, Sir Hargrave. It is no impeachment of ſincerity, if a free perſon anſwers not every queſtion that may be put to her, by thoſe to whom ſhe is not accountable.

Very true, madam. But as it is no impeachment of your freedom to anſwer this queſtion either negatively or affirmatively, and as you glory in your frankneſs, let me beſeech you to anſwer it; Are you, madam, or are you not, diſengaged in your affections?

Excuſe me, Sir Hargrave; I don't think you are intitled to an anſwer to this queſtion. Nor, perhaps, would you be determined by the anſwer I ſhould make to it, whether negative or affirmative.

Give me leave to ſay, madam, that I have ſome little knowlege of Mr. Fenwick and Mr. Greville, and of their addreſſes. They have both owned, that no hopes have you given them; yet declare that they *will* hope. Have you, madam, been as explicit to them, as you are to me?

I have, Sir.

Then *they* are not the men I have to fear — Mr. Orme, madam —

Is a good man, Sir.

Ah! madam!—But why then will you not ſay that you are engaged?

If I own I *am*; perhaps it will not avail me: It will ſtill much leſs, if I ſay I am *not*.

Avail you! dear Miſs Byron! I have pride, madam. If I had not, I ſhould not aſpire to *your* favour: But give me leave to ſay [and he reddened with anger] that my fortune, my deſcent, and my ardent affection

for

for you, conſidered, it may not *diſ*-avail you. Your relations will at leaſt think ſo, if I may have the honour of your conſent for applying to them.

May your fortune, Sir Hargrave, be a bleſſing to you! It *will*, in proportion as you do good with it. But were it twice as much, that *alone* would have no charms for me. My duties would be increaſed with my power. *My* fortune is an humble one; but were it leſs it would ſatisfy my ambition while I am ſingle; and if I marry, I ſhall not deſire to live beyond the eſtate of the man I chooſe.

Upon my ſoul, madam, *you* muſt be mine. Every word you ſpeak adds a rivet to my chains.

Then, Sir, let us ſay no more upon this ſubject.

He then laid a title to my gratitude from the paſſion he avowed for me.

That is a very poor plea, Sir, ſaid I, as you yourſelf would think, I believe, were one of our Sex, whom you could not like, to claim a return of Love from you upon it.

You are too refined, ſurely, madam.

Refined! what meant the man by the word in this place.

I believe, Sir, we differ very widely in many of our ſentiments.

We will not differ in *one*, madam, when I know yours; ſuch is the opinion I have of your prudence, that I will adopt them, and make them my own.

This may be *ſaid*, Sir, but there is hardly a man in the world that, ſaying it, would keep his word: Nor a woman, who ought to *expect* he ſhould.

But you will allow of my viſits to your couſins, madam?

Not on my account, Sir.

You will not withdraw if I come? You will not refuſe ſeeing me?

As you will be no viſitor of mine, I muſt be allowed to act accordingly. Had I the leaſt thought of encouraging

raging your addreſſes, I would deal with you as openly as is conſiſtent with my notions of modeſty and decorum.

Perhaps, madam, for my gay behaviour at Lady Betty Williams's, you think me too airy a man. You have doubts of my ſincerity: You queſtion my honour.

That, Sir, would be to injure myſelf

Your *objections*, then, dear madam? Give me, I beſeech you, ſome one material objection.

Why, Sir, ſhould you urge me thus?—When I have no *doubt*, it is unneceſſary to look into my own mind for the particular reaſons that move me to diſapprove of the addreſſes of a gentleman whoſe profeſſions of regard for me, notwithſtanding, intitle him to civility and acknowleg ment

By my ſoul, madam, this is very comical:

I do not like thee, Dr. Fell;
The reaſon why, I cannot tell—
But I don't like thee, Dr. Fell.

Such, madam, ſeem to me to be your reaſons.

You are very pleaſant, Sir. But let me ſay, that if your are in earneſt in your profeſſions, you could not have quoted any-thing more againſt you than theſe humorous lines; ſince a diſlike of ſuch a nature as is implied by them, muſt be a diſlike ariſing from ſomething reſembling a natural averſion; whether juſt or not is little to the purpoſe.

I was not aware of that, replied he: But I hope yours to me is not ſuch a one.

Excuſe me, couſin, ſaid I, turning to Mrs. Reeves: But I believe I have talked away the tea-time.

I think not of tea, ſaid ſhe.

Hang tea, ſaid Mr. Reeves.

The devil fly away with the tea-kettle, ſaid Sir Hargrave; let it not have entrance here, till I have ſaid what I have further to ſay. And let me tell you,

Miſs

Miſs Byron, that tho' you may not have a dying lover, you ſhall have a reſolute one: For I will not ceaſe purſuing you till you are mine, or till you are the wife of ſome other man.

He ſpoke this fiercely, and even rudely. I was diſguſted as much at his manner, as with his words.

I cannot, replied I, but congratulate myſelf on *one* felicity, ſince I have been in your company, Sir; and that is, That in this whole converſation (and I think it much too long) I have not one thing to reproach myſelf with, or be ſorry for.

Your ſervant, madam, bowing — But I am of the *contrary* opinion. By heaven, madam [with anger and an air of inſolence] I think you have pride, madam—

Pride, Sir!

Cruelty.—

Cruelty, Sir!

Ingratitude, madam.

I thought it was ſtaying to be inſulted. All that Sir John Alleſtree had ſaid of him came into my head.

Hold, Sir (for he ſeemed to be going on): *Pride*, *Cruelty*, *Ingratitude*, are crimes black enough. If you think I am guilty of them, excuſe me that I retire for the benefit of recollection.—And, making a low courteſy, I withdrew in haſte. He beſought me to return; and followed me to the ſtair's foot,

He ſhewed *his* pride, and his ill-nature too, before my couſins, when I was gone. He bit his lip: He walked about the room; then ſitting down, he lamented, defended, accuſed, and re-defended himſelf; and yet beſought their intereſt with me.

He was greatly diſturbed, he owned, that with *ſuch* honourable *intentions*, with ſo much POWER to make me happy, and *ſuch* a WILL to do ſo, he ſhould be refuſed; and this without my aſſigning one reaſon for it.

And my couſins (to whom he again referred on that head) anſwering him, that they believed me diſengaged in my affections—D— him, he ſaid, if he could account *then* for my behaviour to him. He,

He, however, threatened Mr. Orme: Who (*if any*) he ſaid, was the man I favoured. I had acknowleged, that neither Greville nor Fenwick were. My proud repulſe had ſtung him, he owned. He begged, that they would ſend for me down in their names.

They liked not the humour he ſeemed to be in well enough to comply with his requeſt; and he ſent up in his own name.

But I returned my compliments: I was buſy in writing [And ſo I was—To you, my Lucy]; I hoped Sir Hargrave, and my couſins, would excuſe me. I put *them* in to ſoften my refuſal.

This ſtill more diſpleaſed him. He beſought *their* pardon; but he would haunt me like a ghoſt. In ſpite of man and devil I ſhould be his, he had the preſumption to repeat: And went away with a flaming face.

Don't you think, my dear, that my couſin Reeves was a little two mild in his own houſe; as I am under his guardianſhip? But perhaps he was the more patient for that very reaſon; and he *is* one of the beſt-natured men in England. And then 8000 *l.* a-year!—Yet why ſhould a man of my couſin's independent fortune—But grandeur will have its charms!

Thus did Sir Hargrave confirm all that Sir John Alleſtree had ſaid of his bad qualities: And I think I am more afraid of him than ever I was of any man before. I remember, that *miſchievous* is one of the bad qualities Sir John attributed to him: And *revengeful* another. Should I ever ſee him again on the ſame errand, I will be more explicit, as to my being abſolutely diſengaged in my affections, if I can be ſo without giving him hope, leſt he ſhould do private miſchief to ſome one on my account. Upon my word, I would not, of all the men I have ever ſeen, be the wife of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen.

And ſo much for this firſt viſit of his. I wiſh his pride may be enough piqued to make it the laſt.

But could you have thought he would have ſhewn himſelf

himſelf ſo ſoon? —Yet he had paraded ſo much, before I went down, to my couſins, and ſo little expected a direct and determined repulſe, that a man of his ſelf-conſequence might, perhaps, be allowed to be the more eaſily piqued by it.

Lady Betty has ſent us notice, that on Thurſday next, there will be a ball at the Opera houſe in the Hay-market. My couſins are to chooſe what their's will be; but ſhe inſiſts, that my dreſs ſhall be left to her. I am not to know what it is to be, till the day before, or the very day. If I like it not, ſhe will not put me to any expence about it.

You will eaſily imagine, upon ſuch an alternative, I ſhall approve of it, be it what it will. I have only requeſted, that I may not be ſo remarkably dreſſed, as to attract the eyes of the company: If I am, I ſhall not behave with any tolerable preſence of mind.

LETTER XVIII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

Friday, Feb. 10.

ONE of Mr. Greville's ſervants has juſt been here, with his maſter's compliments. So the wretch is come to town. I believe I ſhall ſoon be able to oblige him: He wiſhes, you know, to provoke me to ſay I *hate* him.

Surely I draw inconveniencies upon myſelf by being ſo willing to pay civility for eſteem. Yet it is in my nature to do ſo, and I cannot help it without committing a kind of violence on my temper. There is no merit, therefore, in my behaviour, on ſuch occaſions. Very pretty ſelf-deception! —I ſtudy my own eaſe, and (before I conſider) am ready to call myſelf patient, and good humoured, and civil, and to attribute to myſelf I know not how many kind and complaiſant things; when I ought, in modeſty, to diſtinguiſh between the *virtue* and the *neceſſity*.

I

I never was uncivil, as I call it, but to one young gentleman; a man of quality (you know who I mean); and that was, becauſe he wanted me to keep ſecret his addreſſes to me, for family conſiderations. The young woman who engages to keep her Lover's ſecrets in this particular, is often brought into a plot againſt herſelf, and oftener ſtill againſt thoſe to whom ſhe owes unreſerved honour and duty: And is not ſuch a conduct alſo an indirect confeſſion, that you know you are engaging in ſomething wrong and unworthy?

Mr. Greville's arrival vexes me. I ſuppoſe it will not be long before Mr. Fenwick comes too. I have a good mind to try to like the modeſt Mr. Orme the better, in ſpite.

Sat. Morn. Feb. 11.

I SHALL have nothing to trouble you with, I think, but ſcenes of courtſhip. Sir Rowland, Sir Hargrave, and Mr. Greville, all met juſt now at our breakfaſt-time.

Sir Rowland came firſt; a little before breakfaſt was ready. After enquiries of Mr. Reeves whether I held in the ſame mind, or not; he deſired to have the favour of one quarter of an hour's converſation with me alone.

Methinks I have a value for this honeſt Knight. Honeſty, my Lucy, is good ſenſe, politeneſs, amiableneſs, all in one. An honeſt man muſt appear in every light with ſuch advantages, as will make even *ſingularity* agreeable. I went down directly.

He met me; and taking my not-withdrawn hand, and peering in my face, Mercy! ſaid he; the ſame kind aſpect! The ſame ſweet and obliging countenance! How can this be? But you *muſt* be gracious! You *will*. Say you will.

You muſt not urge me, Sir Rowland. You will give me pain if you lay me under a neceſſity to repeat—

Repeat what? Don't ſay a refuſal. Dear madam,

don't ſay a refuſal! Will you not ſave a life? Why, madam, my poor boy is abſolutely and *bonâ fide* broken-hearted. I would have had him come with me: But, no, he could not bear to teaze the beloved of his ſoul! Why there's an inſtance of Love now! Not for all his hopes, not for his life's ſake could he bear to teaze you! None of your fluttering Jack a-dandy's, now, would have ſaid this! And let not ſuch ſucceed, where modeſt merit fails!—Mercy! You are ſtruck with my plea! Don't, don't, God bleſs you now, don't harden your heart on my obſervation. I was reſolved to ſet out in a day or two: But I will ſtay in town, were it a month, to ſee my boy made happy. And, let me tell you, I would not with him to be happy unleſs he could make you ſo.—Come, come—

I was a little affected. I was ſilent.

Come, come, be gracious; be merciful. Dear Lady, be as good as you look to be. One word of comfort for my poor boy. I could kneel to you for one word of comfort—Nay, I *will* kneel; taking hold of my other hand, as he ſtill held one; and down on his knees dropt the honeſt Knight.

I was ſurpriſed. I knew not what to ſay, what to do. I had not the courage to attempt to lift him up. Yet to ſee a man of his years, and who had given himſelf a claim to my eſteem, kneel; and, with gliſtening eyes, looking up to me for *mercy*, as he called it, on his *boy*; how was I affected!—But, at laſt, Riſe, dear Sir Rowland, riſe, ſaid I: You call out for mercy to me; yet have none upon me. O how you diſtreſs me!

I would have withdrawn my hands; but he held them faſt. I ſtamped in tender paſſion [I am *ſure* it was in *tender* paſſion] now with one foot, now with the other; Dear Sir Rowland, riſe; I cannot bear this. I beſeech you riſe [And down I dropt involuntarily on one knee], What can I ſay? Riſe, dear Sir,

on

on *my* knee I beg of you kneel not to me: Indeed, Sir, you greatly diſtreſs me! Pray let go my hands.

Tears ran down his cheeks—And *do* I diſtreſs you, madam! And *do* you vouchſafe to kneel to me?—I will *not* diſtreſs you: For the *world* I will not diſtreſs you.

He aroſe, and let go my hands. I aroſe too abaſhed. He pulled out his handkerchief, and haſtening from me to the window, wiped his eyes. Then turning to me, What a fool I am! What a mere child I make of myſelf! How can I blame my boy? O madam! have you not one word of comfort to ſend by me to my boy? Say, but, you will ſee him. Give him leave to wait on you: Yet, poor ſoul! (wiping his eyes again) he would not be able to ſay a word in his own behalf.—Bid me bring him to you: Bid us come together.

And ſo I could, and ſo I would, Sir Rowland, if no other expectations were to be formed than thoſe of civility. But I will go farther to ſhew my regard for you, Sir: Let me be happy in your friendſhip, and good opinion: Let me look upon you as my father: Let me look upon Mr. Fowler as my brother: I am not ſo happy, as to have either father or brother. And let Mr. Fowler own me as his ſiſter; and every viſit you make me, you will both, in theſe characters, be dearer to me than before.—But, O my father! (already will I call you father!) Urge not your daughter to an impoſſibility!

Mercy! Mercy! What will become of me! What will become of my boy, rather!

He turned from me, with his handkerchief at his eyes again, and even ſobbed: Where are all my purpoſes! Irreſiſtible lady!—But muſt I give up my hopes! Muſt my boy be told—And yet, do you call me *father*; and do you plead for my indulgence as if you were my *daughter*?

Indeed I do; indeed I muſt. I have told Mr. Fow-

ler, with ſo much regard for him, as an honeſt, as a worthy man—

Why that's the weapon that wounds him, that cuts him to the heart! Your gentleneſs, your openneſs—And *are* you determined? *Can* there be no hope?

Mr. *Fowler* is my *Brother*, Sir; and *you* are my *Father*.—Accept me in thoſe characters.

Accept you! Mercy! Accept you!—Forgive me, madam, (catching my hand, and preſſing it with his lips) you do me honour in the appellation: But if your mind ſhould change on conſideration, and from motives of pity—

Indeed, indeed, Sir Rowland, it cannot change.

Why then, I, as well as my Nephew, muſt acquieſce with your pleaſure. But, madam, you don't know what a worthy creature he is. I will not, however, teaze you.—But how, but how, ſhall I ſee Mr. Reeves? I am aſhamed to ſee him with this baby in my face.

And I, Sir Rowland, muſt retire before I can appear. Excuſe me, Sir (withdrawing); but I hope you will breakfaſt with us.

I will drink tea with you, madam, if I can make myſelf fit to be ſeen, were it but to claim you for my *Daughter*: But yet had much rather you would be a farther remove in relation: Would to God you would let it be *Niece!*

I courteſied, as a Daughter might do, parting with her real Father; and withdrew.

And now, my Lucy, will you not be convinced that one of the greateſt pains (the loſs of dear friends excepted) that a grateful mind can know, is to be too much beloved by a worthy heart, and not to be able to return his Love?

My ſheet is ended. With a new one I will begin another Letter.—Yet a few words in the margin—I tell you not, my dear, of the public entertainments to which Lady Betty is continually contriving to draw me out. She intends by it to be very obliging, and *is*

ſo: But my preſent reluctance to go ſo very often, muſt not be overcome, as it poſſibly would be too eaſily done, were I to give way to the temptation. If it be, your Harriet may turn gadder, and never be eaſy but when ſhe is forming parties, or giving way to them, that may make the home, that hitherto has been the chief ſcene of her pleaſures, undelightful to her. Bad habits are ſooner acquired than ſhaken off, as my Grandmamma has often told us.

LETTER XIX.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

WHO would have thought that a man of Sir Rowland's time of life, and a woman ſo young as I, could have ſo much diſcompoſed each other? I obeyed the ſummons to breakfaſt, and entered the room at one door, as he came in at the other. In vain had I made uſe of the ſhort retirement to conceal my emotion from my Couſins. They alſo ſaw Sir Rowland's by his eyes, and looked at him, at me, and at each other.

Mercy! ſaid Sir Rowland, in an accent that ſeemed between crying and laughing, You, you, you, madam, are a ſurpriſing Lady! I, I, I never was ſo affected in my life. And he drew the back of his hand croſs firſt one eye, then the other.

O Sir Rowland, ſaid I, you are a good man. How affecting are the viſible emotions of a manly heart!

My Couſins ſtill looked as if ſurpriſed; but ſaid nothing.

O my Couſins, ſaid I, I have found a Father in Sir Rowland; and I acknowlege a Brother in Mr. Fowler.

Beſt of women! Moſt excellent of creatures! And do you *own* me? He ſnatched my hand, and kiſſed it. What pride do you give me in this open acknowlegement! If it muſt not be *Niece*, why then I will endeavour to rejoice in my *Daughter*, I think. But yet,

my boy, my poor boy—But you are all goodneſs: And with him I ſay, I muſt not teaze you.

What you have been ſaying to each other alone, ſaid Mrs. Reeves, I cannot tell: But I long to know.

Why, madam, I will tell you—if I know how—You muſt know, that I, that I, came as an ambaſſador-extraordinary from my ſorrowful boy: Yet not deſired; not ſent; I came of my own accord, in hopes of getting one word of comfort, and to bring matters on, before I ſet out for Caermarthen.

The ſervant coming in, and a loud rap, rap, rap, on the footman's muſical inſtrument, the knocker of the door, put a ſtop to Sir Rowland's narrative. In apprehenſion of company, I breathed on my hand, and put it to either eye; and Sir Rowland hemmed twice or thrice, and rubbed his, the better to conceal their redneſs, tho' it made them redder than before. He got up, look'd at the glaſs: Would have ſung. *Toll, doll*—Hem, ſaid he; as if the muſcles of his face were in the power of his voice. Mercy! All the infant ſtill in my eye—*Toll, doll*—Hem!—I would ſing it away, if I could.

Sir Hargrave enter'd bowing, ſcraping to me, and with an air not ungraceful.

Servant, Sir, ſaid the Knight (to Sir Hargrave's ſilent ſalute to him) bowing, and looking at the Baronet's genteel morning dreſs, and then at his own—Who the deuce is *he!* whiſpering to Mr. Reeves; who then preſented each to the other by name.

The Baronet approached me; I have, madam, a thouſand pardons to aſk—

Not one, Sir.

Indeed I have—And moſt heartily do I beg—

You are forgiven, Sir—

But I will not be ſo *eaſily* forgiven.

Mercy! whiſpered the Knight to Mr. Reeves, I don't like'n, Ah! my poor boy: No wonder at this rate!—

You

You have not much to fear, Sir Rowland (re-whiſper'd my Couſin) on this gentleman's account.

Thank you, thank you—And yet 'tis a fine figure of a man! whiſper'd again Sir Rowland: Nay, if ſhe can withſtand *him*—But a word to the wiſe, Mr. Reeves!—Hem!—I am a little eaſier than I was.

He turned from my Couſin with ſuch an air, as if from contraſted pleaſure and pain, he would again have ſung *Toll, doll.*

The ſervant came in with the breakfaſt: And we had no ſooner ſat down, as before, than we were alarmed by another modern rapping. Mr. Reeves was call'd out, and return'd, introducing Mr. Greville.

Who the deuce is *he?* whiſper'd to me Sir Rowland (as he ſat next me) before Mr. Reeves could name him.

Mr. Greville profoundly bowed to me. I aſked after the health of all our friends in Northamptonſhire.

Have you ſeen Fenwick, madam?

No, Sir.

A dog! I thought he had played me a trick. I miſſed him for three days—But (in a low voice) if you have not ſeen him, I have ſtolen a march upon *him!*—Well, I had rather aſk *his* pardon than he ſhould aſk *mine.* I rejoice to ſee you well, madam! (raiſing his voice)—But what!—looking at my eyes.

Colds are very rife in London, Sir—

I am glad it is no worſe; for your Grandmamma, and all friends in the country, are well.

I have found a papa, Mr. Greville (referring to Sir Rowland) ſince I came to town. This good gentleman gives me leave to call him father.

No *ſon!*—I hope, Sir Rowland, you have no ſon, ſaid Mr. Greville: The relation comes not about that way, I hope. And laughed, as he uſed to do, at his own ſmartneſs.

The very queſtion, I was going to put, by my ſoul, ſaid the Baronet.

No!—ſaid the Knight: But I have a *Nephew*, gentlemen—A very pretty young fellow! And I have this to ſay before ye all (I am downright Dunſtable) I had much rather call this lady *Niece*, than *Daughter*. And then the Knight forced a laugh, and looked round upon us all.

O Sir Rowland, replied I, I *have* Uncles, more than one—I *am* a Niece: But I have not had for many years till now the happineſs of a Father.

And do you own me, madam, before all this gay company?—The firſt time I beheld you, I remember I called you a perfect paragon. Why, madam, you are the moſt excellent of women!

We are ſo much convinced of this, Sir Rowland, ſaid the Baronet, that I don't know, but Miſs Byron's chooſing you for a *Father*, inſtead of an *Uncle*, may have ſaved two or three throats.

And then he laughed. His laugh was the more ſeaſonable, as it ſoftened the ſhockingneſs of his expreſſion.

Mr. Greville and Sir Hargrave had been in company twice before in Northamptonſhire at the races: But now-and-then looked upon each other with envious eyes; and once or twice were at croſs-purpoſes: But my particular notice of the Knight made all paſs lightly over.

Sir Rowland went firſt away. He claimed one word with his *Daughter*, in the character of a *Father*.

I withdrew with him to the further end of the room.

Not *one* word of comfort? not *one* word, madam?—ſo my boy? whiſpered he.

My compliments (ſpeaking low) to my *Brother*, Sir. I wiſh him as well and as happy as I think he deſerves to be.

Well but—Well but—

Only remember, Sir Rowland, that you act in character. I followed you hither, on the ſtrength of your authority, as a *Father*; I beg, Sir, that you will preſerve to me that character. Why

Why God in heaven bleſs my daughter, if *only* daughter you can be. Too well do I underſtand you! I will ſee how my poor Nephew will take it. If it *can* be no otherwiſe, I will prevail upon him, I think, to go down with me to Caermarthen for a few months.—But as to thoſe two fine gentlemen, madam—It would grieve me ('tis a folly to deny it) to ſay I have ſeen the man that is to ſupplant my Nephew.

I will act in character, Sir Rowland: As your *daughter*, you have a right to know my ſentiments on this ſubject—You have not *yet* ſeen the man you ſeem to be afraid of.

You are all goodneſs, madam—my *daughter*—and I cannot bear it!

He ſpoke this loud enough to be heard; and Mr. Greville and the Baronet both, with ſome emotion, roſe, and turned about to us.

Once more, Sir Rowland, ſaid I, my compliments to my *Brother*—Adieu!

God in heaven bleſs you, madam, that's all—Gentlemen, your ſervant. Mrs. Reeves, your moſt obedient humble ſervant. Madam, to me, you will allow me, and my Nephew too, one more viſit, I hope, before I ſet out for Caermarthen.

I courteſied, and joined my Couſins. Away went the Knight, bruſhing the ground with his hat, at his going out. Mr. Reeves waited on him to the outward door.

'Bye, 'bye, to you, Mr. Reeves—with ſome emotion (as my Couſin told me afterwards)—A wonderful creature! By mercy, a wonderful creature!—I go away with my heart full; yet am pleaſed; I know not why neither, that's the jeſt of it—'Bye, Mr. Reeves, I can ſtay no longer.

An odd mortal! ſaid the *man of the town*—But he ſeems to know on which ſide his bread is butter'd.

A whimſical old fellow! ſaid the *man of the country*. But I rejoice that he has not a *ſon*; that's all.

A good many frothy things paſſed not worth relate-

ing. I wanted them both to be gone. They ſeemed each to think it time; but looked as if neither cared to leave the other behind him.

At laſt, Mr. Greville, who hinted to me, that he knew I loved not too long an intruſion, bowed, and, politely enough, took his leave. And then the Baronet began, with apologizing for his behaviour at taking leave on his laſt viſit.

Some gentlemen, I ſaid, had one way, ſome another, of expreſſing themſelves on particular occaſions: He had thought fit to ſhew me what was his.

He ſeemed a little diſconcerted. But quickly recovering himſelf, he could not indeed excuſe himſelf, he ſaid, for having then called me *cruel*—Cruel, he hoped he ſhould not find me—*Proud*—I knew not what pride was. *Ungrateful*—I could not be guilty of ingratitude. He begged me to forgive his peremptorineſs—He had hoped (as he had been aſſured, that my affections were abſolutely diſengaged) that the propoſals he had to make, would have been acceptable; and ſo poſitive a refuſal, without any one reaſon aſſigned, and on his firſt viſit, had indeed hurt his pride (he owned, he ſaid, that he had ſome pride) and made him forget that he was addreſſing himſelf to a woman who deſerved and met with the veneration of every one who approached her. He next expreſſed himſelf with apprehenſions on Mr. Greville's arrival in town. He ſpoke ſlightly of him. Mr. Greville, I doubt not, will ſpeak as ſlightly of Sir Hargrave. And if I believe them both, I fanſy I ſhall not injure either.

Mr. Greville's arrival, I ſaid, ought not to concern me. He was to do as he thought fit. I was only deſirous to be allowed the ſame free agency that I was ready to allow to others.

That could not be, he ſaid. Every man who ſaw me, muſt wiſh me to be his; and endeavour to obtain his wiſhes.

And then making vehement profeſſions of Love, he offered

offered me large ſettlements; and to put it in my power to do all the good that he knew it was in my heart to do—And that I ſhould preſcribe to him in every thing as to place of reſidence, excurſions, even to the going abroad to France, to Italy, and where-ever I pleaſed.

To all which I anſwer'd as before; and when he inſiſted upon my reaſons for refuſing him, I frankly told him, tho' I owned it was with ſome reluctance, that I had not the opinion of his morals that I muſt have of thoſe of the man to whom I gave my hand in marriage.

Of my *morals*, madam! (ſtarting; and his colour went and came) My *morals*, madam!—I thought he looked with malice: But I was not intimidated: And yet my Couſins looked at me with ſome little ſurprize for my plain dealing, tho' not as blaming me.

Be not diſpleaſed, Sir, with my freedom. You call upon me to make objections. I mean not to upbraid you; that is not *my* buſineſs; but thus called upon, I muſt repeat—I ſtopt.

Proceed, madam, angrily.

Indeed, Sir Hargrave, you muſt pardon me on *this* occaſion, if I repeat that I have not that opinion of your morals—

Very well, madam—

That I muſt have of thoſe of the man on whoſe worthineſs I muſt build my hopes of *preſent* happineſs, and to whoſe guidance entruſt my *future*. This, Sir, is a very material conſideration with me, tho' I am not fond of talking upon it, except on *proper* occaſions, and to *proper* perſons: But, Sir, let me add, that I am determin'd to live longer ſingle. I think it too early to engage in a life of care: And if I do not meet with a man to whom I can give my whole heart, I never will marry at all [O how maliciouſly looked the man!]—You are angry, Sir Hargrave, added I; but you have no right to be ſo. You addreſs me as

one who is her own miſtreſs. And tho' I would not be thought rude, I value myſelf on my openneſs of heart.

He aroſe from his ſeat. He walked about the room muttering, "You have no opinion of my morals"—By heaven, madam!—But I will bear it all—Yet, "No opinion of my morals!"—I cannot bear that—

He then clenched his fiſt, and held it up to his head; and ſnatching up his hat, bowing to the ground to us all, his face crimſoned over (as the time before) he withdrew.

Mr. Reeves attended him to the door—"Not like "my morals!" ſaid he—I have *enemies*, Mr. Reeves—"Not like my morals!"—Miſs Byron treats politely every-body but me, Sir. Her ſcorn may be repaid—Would to God I could ſay with ſcorn, Mr. Reeves.—Adieu. Excuſe my warmth.—Adieu.

And into his chariot he ſtept, pulling up the glaſſes with violence; and, as Mr. Reeves told us, rearing up his head to the top of it, as he ſat ſwelling. And away it drove.

His menacing airs, and abrupt departure, terrified me. I did not recover myſelf in an hour.

A fine huſband for your Harriet would this half madman make!—O Mr. Fowler, Sir Rowland, Mr. Orme, what good men are you to Sir Hargrave! Should I have known half ſo much as I do of his ill qualities, had I not refuſed him? Drawn in by his profeſſions of Love, and by 8000*l.* a year, I might have married him; and, when too late, found myſelf miſerable, yoked with a tyrant and madman, for the remainder of a life begun with happy proſpects, and glorying in every one's love!

LETTER XX.

Miſs BYRON. *In continuation.*

Monday, February 13.

I Have received my Uncle's long letter. And I thank him for the pains he has taken with me. He is very good. But my Grandmamma and my Aunt are equally ſo, and, in the main, much kinder, in acquitting me of ſome charges which he is pleaſed to make upon his poor Harriet. But, either for caution or reproof, I hope to be the better for his Letter.

James is ſet out for Northamptonſhire: Pray receive him kindly. He is honeſt: And Sally has given me a hint, as if a ſweetheart is in his head: If ſo, his impatience to leave London may be accounted for. My Grandmamma has obſerved, that young people of ſmall or no fortunes ſhould not be diſcouraged from marrying: Who that could be maſters or miſtreſſes would be ſervants? The honeſt poor, as ſhe has often ſaid, are a very valuable part of the creation.

Mr. Reeves has ſeen ſeveral footmen, but none that he gave me the trouble of ſpeaking to till juſt now; when a well-looking young man, about twenty-ſix years of age, offered himſelf, and whom I believe I ſhall like. Mrs. Reeves ſeems mightily taken with him. He is well-behaved, has a very ſenſible look, and ſeems to merit a better ſervice.

Mr. Reeves has written for a character of him to the laſt maſter he lived with; Mr. Bagenhall, a young gentleman in the neighbourhood of Reading: Of whom he ſpeaks well in the main; but modeſtly objected to his hours, and free way of life. The young man came to town but yeſterday, and is with a widow Siſter, who keeps an inn in Smithfield. I have a *mind* to like him, and this makes me more particular about him.

His

His name is William Wilſon: He aſks pretty high wages: But wages to a good ſervant are not to be ſtood upon. What ſignify forty or fifty ſhillings a year? An honeſt ſervant ſhould be enabled to lay up ſomething for age and infirmity. Hire him at once, Mrs. Reeves ſays. She will be anſwerable for his honeſty from his looks, and from his anſwers to the queſtions aſk'd him.

Sir Hargrave has been here again. Mrs. Reeves, Miſs Clements, and I, were in the back room together. We had drank tea; and I excuſed myſelf to his meſſage, as engaged.

He talk'd a good deal to Mr. Reeves: Sometimes high, ſometimes humble. He had not intended, he ſaid, to have renewed his viſits. My diſdain had ſtung him to the heart: Yet he could not keep away. He called himſelf names. He was determined I ſhould be his; and ſwore to it. A man of his fortune to be refuſed, by a Lady who had not (and whom he wiſh'd not to have) an anſwerable fortune, and no preferable liking to any other man [There Sir Hargrave was miſtaken; for I like almoſt every man I know, better than him]; his perſon not contemptible [And then, my Couſin ſays, he ſurveyed himſelf from head to foot at the glaſs]; was very, *very* unaccountable.

He aſked if Mr. Greville came up with any hopes?

Mr. Reeves told him that I was offended at his coming, and he was ſure he would not be the better for his journey.

He was glad of that, he ſaid. There were two or three free things, proceeded he, ſaid to me in converſation by Mr. Greville; which I knew not well what to make of: But they ſhall paſs, if he has no more to boaſt of than I. I know Mr. Greville's bluſtering character; but I wiſh the carrying of Miſs Byron were to depend upon the ſword's point between us. I would not come into ſo paltry a compromiſe with him as Fenwick has done. But ſtill the imputing

want

want of *morals* to me, ſticks with me. Surely I am a better man, in point of morals, than either Greville or Fenwick. What man on earth does not take liberties with the Sex? Hay, you know, Mr. Reeves! Women were made for us: And they like us not the worſe for loving them. *Want of morals!*—And objected to me by a *Lady!*—Very extraordinary, by my ſoul!—Is it not better to ſow all one's wild oats before matrimony, than run riot afterwards?—What ſay you, Mr. Reeves?

Mr. Reeves was too patient with him. He is a mild man: Yet wants not ſpirit, my Couſin ſays, on occaſion. He gave Sir Hargrave the hearing; who went away, ſwearing, that I ſhould be his, in ſpite of man or devil.

Monday Night.

Mr. Greville came in the evening. He begged to be allowed but ten words with me in the next room, I deſired to be excuſed, You know, Sir, ſaid I, that I never comply'd with a requeſt of this nature, at Selby-houſe. He looked hard at my Couſins; and firſt one, then the other, went out. He then was ſolicitous to know what were Sir Hargrave's expectations from me. He expreſſed himſelf uneaſy upon his account. He hoped ſuch a man as *that* would not be encouraged. Yet his ample fortune—Woman! woman!—But he was neither a wiſer nor a better man than himſelf: And he hoped Miſs Byron would not give a preference to fortune *merely*, againſt a man who had been her admirer for ſo long a time; and who wanted neither will nor power to make her happy.

It was very irkſome to me, I anſwer'd, to be obliged ſo often to repeat the ſame things to him. I would not be thought affronting to any-body, eſpecially to a neighbour with whom my friends were upon good terms: But I did not think myſelf anſwerable to him, or to any one out of my own family, for

for my viſitors; or for whom my Couſin Reeves's thought fit to receive as theirs.

Would I give him an aſſurance, that Sir Hargrave ſhould have no encouragement?

No, Sir, I will not. Would not that be to give you indirectly a kind of controul over me? Would not that be to encourage a hope, that I never *will* encourage?

I love not my own ſoul, madam, as I love you: I muſt, and will, perſevere. If I thought Sir Hargrave had the leaſt hope, by the great God of heaven, I would pronounce his days numbered.

I am but too well acquainted with your raſhneſs, Mr. Greville. What formerly paſſed between you and another gentleman, gave me pain enough. In ſuch an enterprize your own days might be numbered as well as another's. But I enter not into this ſubject—*Henceforth* be ſo good as not to impute incivility to me, if I deny myſelf to your viſits.

I would have withdrawn—

Dear Miſs Byron (ſtepping between me and the door) leave me not in anger. If matters *muſt* ſtand as they were, I hope you *can*, I hope you *will*, aſſure me, that this Sir Fopling—

What right have you, Sir, to any aſſurance of this nature from me?

None, madam—But from your goodneſs—Dear Miſs Byron, *condeſcend* to ſay, that this Sir Hargrave ſhall not make any impreſſion on your heart. For *his ſake* ſay it, if not for *mine*. I know you care not what becomes of *me*; yet let not this milk-faced, and tyger-hearted ſop, for that is his character, obtain favour from you. Let your choice, if it muſt fall on another man, and not on me, fall on one to whoſe ſuperior merit, and to whoſe good fortune, I can ſubſcribe. For your own fame's ſake, let a man of unqueſtionable honour be the happy man; and vouchſafe as to a neighbour, and as to a well-wiſhing friend only

only (I aſk it not in the light of a Lover) to tell me that Sir Hargrave Pollexfen ſhall not be the man.

What, Mr. Greville, let me aſk you, is your buſineſs in town?

My *chief* buſineſs, madam, you may gueſs at. I had a hint of this man's intentions given me; and that he has the vanity to think he ſhall ſucceed. But if I can be aſſured that you will not be prevailed upon in favour of a man, whoſe fortune is ſo ample—

You will then return to Northamptonſhire?

Why, madam, I can't but ſay that now I am in town, and that I have beſpoke a new equipage, and-ſo-forth—

Nay, Sir, it is nothing to me, what you will or will not do: Only be pleaſed to remember, that as in Northamptonſhire your viſits were to my Uncle Selby, not to me, they will be here in London, to my Couſin Reeves's only.

Too well do I know that you can be cruel if you will: But is it your *pleaſure* that I return to the country?

My *pleaſure*, Sir!—Mr. Greville is ſurely to do as he pleaſes. I only wiſh to be allowed the ſame liberty.

You are ſo very delicate, Miſs Byron! So very much afraid of giving the leaſt advantage—

And men are ſo ready to take advantage—But yet, Mr. Greville, not ſo delicate as juſt. I do aſſure you, that if I were not determined—

Determined!—Yes, yes! You can be *ſteady*, as Mr. Selby calls it! I never knew ſo determined a woman in my life. I own, it was a little inconvenient for me to come to town juſt now: And ſay, that you would *wiſh* me to leave London; and that neither *this Sir Hargrave*, nor *that other man*, your *new Father's* Nephew (What do you call him? Fore-gad, madam, I am afraid of theſe new relations) ſhall make any impreſſion on your heart; and that you will not with-

withdraw when I come here; and I will ſet out next week; and write this very night to let Fenwick know how matters ſtand, and that I am coming down but little the better for my journey: And this may ſave you ſeeing your other tormentor, as your Couſin Lucy ſays you once called that poor devil, and the ſtill poorer devil before you.

You are ſo raſh a man, Mr. Greville (and *other* men may be as raſh as you), that I cannot ſay but it would ſave me ſome pain—

O take care, take care, Miſs Byron, that you expreſs yourſelf ſo cautiouſly, as to give no advantage to a poor dog, who would be glad to take a journey to the fartheſt part of the globe to oblige you. But what ſay you about this Sir Hargrave, and about your *new brother?*—Let me tell you, madam, I am ſo much afraid of thoſe whining, inſinuating, creeping dogs, attacking you on the ſide of your compaſſion, and be d—n'd to them (Orme for that) that I *muſt* have a declaration. And now, madam, can't you give it with your uſual caution? Can't you give it, as I put it, as to a *neighbour*, as to a *well-wiſher*, and-ſo-forth, not as to a Lover?

Well then, Mr Greville, as a *neighbour*, as a *well-wiſher*; and ſince you own it was inconvenient to your affairs to come up—I adviſe you to go down again.

The devil! how you have hit it! Your delicacy ought to thank *me* for the loop-hole. The condition, madam; The condition, If I take your *neighbourly* advice?

Why, Mr. Greville, I do moſt ſincerely declare to you, as to a neighbour and well-wiſher, that I never, *yet*, have ſeen the man to whom I can think of giving my hand.

Yes, you have! By Heaven you have (ſnatching my hand): You ſhall give it to *me!*—And the ſtrange wretch preſſed it ſo hard to his mouth, that he made prints upon it with his teeth. Oh!

Oh! cry'd I, withdrawing my hand, ſurpris'd, and my face, as I could feel, all in a glow.

And *Oh!* ſaid he, mimicking (and ſnatching my other hand, as I would have run from him) and patting it, ſpeaking thro' his cloſed teeth, You may be glad you have a hand left. By my ſoul, I could eat you.

This was your diſconſolate, fallen-ſpirited, Greville, Lucy!

I ruſhed into the company in the next room. He followed me with an air altogether unconcerned, and begged to look at my hand; whiſpering to Mrs. Reeves; By Jupiter, ſaid he, I had like to have eaten up your lovely Couſin. I was beginning with her hand.

I was more offended with this inſtance of his aſſureance and unconcern, than with the freedom itſelf; becauſe that had the appearance of his uſual gaiety with it. I thought it beſt, however, not to be too ſerious upon it. But next time he gets me by himſelf, he ſhall eat up both my hands.

At taking leave, he hoped his mad flight had not diſcompoſed me. See, Miſs Byron, ſaid he, what you get by making an honeſt fellow deſperate!—But you inſiſt upon my leaving the town? As a *neighbour*, as a *well-wiſher*, you *adviſe* it, madam? Come, come, don't be afraid of ſpeaking after me, when I endeavour to hit your cue.

I do *adviſe* you—

Conditions remember! You know what you have declared—Angel of a woman! ſaid he again thro' his ſhut teeth.

I left him; and went up ſtairs; glad I had got rid of him.

He has ſince ſeen Mr. Reeves, and told him, he will make me one viſit more before he leaves London: And pray tell her, ſaid he, that I have actually written to my *brother tormentor* Fenwick, that I am returning to Northamptonſhire.

I told

I told you, that Miſs Clements was with me when Sir Hargrave came laſt. I like her every time I ſee her, better than before. She has a fine underſtanding; and if languages, according to my Grandfather's obſervation, need not be deemed an *indiſpenſable* part of learning, ſhe may be looked upon as learned.

She has engaged me to breakfaſt with her to-morrow morning; when ſhe is to ſhew me her books, needle-works, and other curioſities. Shall I not fanſy myſelf in my Lucy's cloſet? How continually, amid all this fluttering ſcene, do I think of my dear friends in Northamptonſhire! Expreſs for me love, duty, gratitude, every ſentiment that fills the heart of

Your HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXI.

Miſs BYRON. *In continuation.*

Tueſday Morning, Feb. 14.

I Have paſſed an agreeable two hours with Miſs Clements, and am juſt returned. She is extremely ingenious, and perfectly unaffected. I am told, that ſhe writes finely; and is a madame de Sevigne to her correſpondents. I hope to be one of them. But ſhe has not, I find, ſuffered her pen to run away with her needle; nor her reading to interfere with that houſewifry which the beſt judges hold ſo indiſpenſable in the character of a good woman.

I revere her for this, as her example may be produced as one, in anſwer to ſuch as object (I am afraid ſometimes too juſtly, but I hope too generally) againſt learning in women. Methinks, however, I would not have learning the *principal* diſtinction of the woman I love. And yet, where talents are *given*, ſhould we wiſh them to be either uncultivated or unacknowleged? Surely, Lucy, we may pronounce, that where no duty is neglected for the acquirement; where modeſty, delicacy,

delicacy, and a teachable ſpirit, are preſerved, as characteriſtics of the Sex, it need not be thought a diſgrace to be ſuppoſed to know ſomething.

Miſs Clements is happy as well as your Harriet, in an Aunt, that loves her. She has a Mother living, who is too great a ſelf-lover, to regard any-body elſe as ſhe ought. She lives as far off as York, and was ſo unnatural a parent to this good child, that her Aunt was not eaſy till ſhe got her from her. Mrs. Wimburn looks upon her as her daughter, and intends to leave her all ſhe is worth.

The old Lady was not very well; but ſhe obliged us with her agreeable company for half an hour.

Miſs Clements and I agreed to fall in occaſionally upon each other without ceremony.

I ſhould have told you, that the laſt maſter of the young man, William Wilſon, having given him in writing a very good character, I have entertained him; and his firſt ſervice was attending on me to Miſs Clements.

Lady Betty called here in my abſence. She is, it ſeems, very full of the dreſſes, and mine in particular: But I muſt know nothing about it, as yet. We are to go to her houſe to dreſs, and to proceed from thence in chairs. She is to take care of every thing. You ſhall know, my Lucy, what figure I am to make, when I know it myſelf.

The Baronet alſo called at my Couſins while I was out. He ſaw only Mr. Reeves. He ſtaid about a quarter of an hour. He was very moody and ſullen, it ſeems. Quite another man, Mr. Reeves ſaid, than he had ever ſeen him before. Not one laugh; not one ſmile. All that fell from his lips was Yes or No; or by way of invective againſt the Sex. It was "The devil of a Sex." It was a curſed thing, he ſaid, that a man could neither be happy with them, nor without them. *Devil's baits* was another of his compliments to us. He hardly mentioned my name.

Mr.

Mr. Reeves at laſt began to railly him upon his moodineſs; and plainly ſaw, that to avoid ſhewing more of his petulance (when he had not a right to ſhew any) to a man of Mr. Reeves's conſideration, and in his own houſe, he went away the ſooner. His footmen and coachman, he believed, had an ill time of it; for, without reaſon, he curſed them, ſwore at them, and threatened them.

What does the man haunt us for?—Why brings he ſuch odious humours to Mr. Reeves's?

But no more of ſuch a man, nor of any-thing elſe, till my next. Only,

Adieu, my Lucy.

LETTER XXII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

Wedneſday Morning, Feb. 15.

MR. Greville took leave of us yeſterday evening, in order to ſet out this morning, on his return home. He would fain have engaged me for half an hour, alone; but I would not oblige him.

He left London, he ſaid, with ſome regret, becauſe of the *fluttering* Sir Hargrave, and the *creeping* Mr. Fowler: But depended upon my declaration that I had not in *either of them* ſeen the man I could encourage. *Either* of them were the words he choſe to uſe; for, in compliment to himſelf, he would not repeat my very words, that I had not yet ſeen *any man* to whom I could give my hand. Shall I give you a few particulars of what paſſed between me and this very whimſical man?—I will.

He had been enquiring, he ſaid, into the character and pretenſions of my *brother* Fowler; and intended, if he could bring Orme and him together, to make a match between them, who ſhould out-whine the other.

Heroes,

Heroes, I told him, ought not to make a jeſt of thoſe, who, on compariſon, gave them all their advantages.

He bowed, and called himſelf my ſervant—And with an affected laugh, Yet, madam, yet, madam, I am not afraid of theſe *piping* men: Tho' you have compaſſion for ſuch *watry-headed* fellows, yet you have *only* compaſſion.

Reſpectful love, Mr. Greville, is not always the indication either of a weak head, or a faint heart; any more than the contrary is of a true ſpirit.

Perhaps ſo, madam. But yet I am not afraid of theſe two men.

You have no *reaſon* to be afraid of any body, on my account, Mr. Greville.

I hope not.

You will find, Sir, at laſt, that you had better take my meaning. It is obvious enough.

But I have no mind to hang, drown, or piſtol myſelf.

Mr. Greville ſtill!—Yet it would be well if there were not many Mr. Greville's.

I take your meaning, madam. You have explained it heretofore. It is, That I am a libertine; that we have all one dialect; and that I can ſay nothing new, or that is worthy of your attention—There, madam! May I not be always ſure of your meaning, when I conſtrue it againſt myſelf?

I wiſh, Sir, that my *neighbour* would give me leave to behave to him as to my *neighbour*—

And could you, madam, ſuppoſing *Love* out of the queſtion (which it cannot be), could you, in *that* caſe, regard me as your neighbour?

Why not, Sir?

Becauſe I believe you hate me; and I only want you to tell me that you do.

I hope, Sir, I ſhall never have reaſon given me to hate any man.

But if you hate any one man more than another, is it not me? [I was ſilent] Strange, Mrs. Reeves, turning to her, that Miſs Byron is not ſuſceptible either of Love or Hatred!

She is too good to *hate* any-body; and as for *Love*, her time ſeems not to be yet come.

When it is come, it will come with a vengeance, I hope.

Uncharitable man! ſaid I, ſmiling.

Don't ſmile: I can't *bear* to ſee you ſmile: Why don't you be angry at me?—Angel of a creature! With his teeth again cloſed, don't ſmile: I cannot bear your bewitching ſmiles!

The man is out of his right mind, Mrs. Reeves. I don't chooſe to ſtay in his company.

I would have withdrawn. He beſought me to ſtay; and ſtood between me and the door. I was angry.

He whimſically ſtamped—Obliging creature!—I beſought you to forbear ſmiling—You frown—Do, God for-ever bleſs you, my dear Miſs Byron, let me be favoured with another frown.

Strange man! and bold as ſtrange!—I would have preſſed to the door; but he ſet his back againſt it.

Theſe are the airs, you know, Lucy, for which I uſed to ſhun him.

Piſh! ſaid I, vexed to be hindered from withdrawing.

Another, another ſuch a frown, ſaid the confident man, and I am happy!—The laſt has left no trace upon your features: It vaniſhed before I could well behold it. Another frown, I beſeech you; another piſh—

I was really angry.—Bear witneſs [looking around him] Bear witneſs! Once did Miſs Byron endeavour to frown: And, to oblige whom?—Her Greville!

Mr. Greville, you had better—I ſtopt. I was vexed. I knew not what I was going to ſay.

How *better*, madam! Am I not deſperate?—But

had

had I better? Say, repeat that again—*Had* I better—Better what?

The man's mad. O my Couſins, let me never again be called to this man.

Mad!—And ſo I am. Mad for *you*. I care not who knows it. Why don't you hate me? He ſnatched at my hand; but I ſtarted back. You own that you never yet loved the man who loved you. Such is your gratitude!—Say, you hate me.

I was ſilent, and turned from him peeviſhly.

Why *then* (as if I had ſaid I did not *hate* him) ſay you love me; and I will look down with contempt upon the greateſt prince on earth.

We ſhould have had more of this—But the rap of conſequence gave notice of the viſit of a perſon of conſideration. It was Sir Hargrave.

The devil pick his bones, ſaid the ſhocking Greville. I ſhall not be civil to him.

He is not *your* gueſt, Mr. Greville, ſaid I—afraid that ſomething affronting might paſs between two ſpirits ſo unmanageable; the one in an humour ſo whimſical, the other ſo very likely to be moody.

True, true; replied he. I will be all ſilence and obſervation.—But I hope you will not *now* be for retiring.

It would be too particular, thought I, if I am: Yet I ſhould have been glad to do ſo.

The Baronet paid his reſpects to every one in a very ſet and formal manner; nor diſtinguiſhed me.

Silly, as vain! thought I: Handſome fop! to imagine thy diſpleaſure of conſequence to me!

Mr. Greville, ſaid Sir Hargrave, the town I underſtand is going to loſe you.

The town, Sir Hargrave, cannot be ſaid to have found me.

How can a man of your gallantry and fortune find himſelf employment in the country, in the winter, I wonder?

Very eaſily, when he has uſed himſelf to it, Sir Hargrave, and has ſeen abroad in greater perfection than you can have them here, the kind of diverſions you all run after, with ſo keen an appetite.

In *greater* perfection! I queſtion that, Mr. Greville: And I have been abroad; though too early, I own, to make critical obſervations.

You may queſtion it, Sir Hargrave; but I don't.

Have we not from Italy the moſt famous ſingers, Mr. Greville, and from thence, and from France, for our money, the moſt famous dancers in the world?

No, Sir. They ſet too great a value in Italy, let me tell you, upon their fineſt voices, and upon their fineſt compoſers too, to let them turn ſtrollers.

Strollers do you call them? Ha, ha, ha, hah!—*Princely* ſtrollers, as we reward them! And as to compoſers, have we not Handel?

There you ſay ſomething, Sir Hargrave. But you have but one Handel in England: They have ſeveral in Italy.

Is it poſſible? ſaid every one.

Let me die, ſaid the Baronet, with a forced laugh, if I am not ready to think that Mr. Greville has run into the fault of people of leſs genius than himſelf. He has got ſuch a taſte for foreign performers, that he cannot think tolerably of thoſe of his own country, be they ever ſo excellent.

Handel, Sir Hargrave, is not an Engliſhman: But I muſt ſay, that of every perſon preſent, I leaſt expected from Sir Hargrave Pollexfen this obſervation.

[He then returned the Baronet's laugh, and not without an air of mingled anger and contempt.]

Nor I this taſte for foreign performances and compoſitions from Mr. Greville; for ſo long time as thou haſt been a downright country gentleman.

[Indeed, thought I to myſelf, you ſeem both to have changed characters. But I know how it comes about: Let one advance what he will, in the preſent humour

of both, the other will contradict it. Mr. Greville knows nothing of muſic: What he ſaid was from hear-ſay: And Sir Hargrave is no better grounded in it.]

A *downright country gentleman!* repeated Mr. Greville, meaſuring Sir Hargrave with his eye, and putting up his lip.

Why, pr'ythee now, Greville, thou what-ſhall-I-call-thee? thou art not offended, I hope, that we are not all of one mind; Ha, ha, ha, hah!

I am offended at nothing you *ſay*, Sir Hargrave.

Nor I at any thing you *look*, my dear, Ha, ha, ha, hah.

Yet his looks ſhewed as much contempt for Mr. Greville as Mr. Greville's did for him. How eaſily might theſe combuſtible ſpirits have blown each other up! Mr. Reeves was once a little apprehenſive of conſequences from the airs of both.

Mr Greville turned from Sir Hargrave to me: Well, Miſs Byron, ſaid he; but as to what we were talking about—

This he ſeemed to ſay, on purpoſe, as I thought by his air, to alarm the Baronet.

I beg pardon, ſaid Sir Hargrave; turning with a ſtiff air to me: I beg pardon, Miſs Byron, if I have intruded—

We were talking of indifferent things, Sir Hargrave, anſwered I—Mere matters of pleaſantry.

I was more in *earneſt* than in *jeſt*, Miſs Byron, replied Mr. Greville.

We all, I believe, thought you very whimſical, Mr. Greville, returned I.

What was ſport to you, madam, is death to me.

Poor Greville! Ha, ha, ha, hah (affectedly laughed the Baronet): But I know you are a joker. You are a man of wit [This a little ſoftened Mr. Greville, who had begun to look grave upon Sir Hargrave] Come, pr'ythee, man, give thyſelf up to me for this night; and I will carry thee to a private concert, where none

but choice ſpirits are admitted; and let us ſee if muſic will not divert theſe gloomy airs, that ſit ſo ill upon the face of one of the livelieſt men in the kingdom.

Muſic! Ay, if Miſs Byron will give us a ſong, and accompany it with the harpſichord, I will deſpiſe all other harmony.

Every one joined in his requeſt: And I was not backward to oblige them, as I thought the converſation bore a little too rough a caſt, and was not likely to take a ſmother turn.

Mr. Greville, who always enjoys any jeſt that tends to reflect on our Sex, begged me to ſing that whimſical ſong ſet by Galliard, which once my uncle made me ſing at Selby-house, in Mr. Greville's hearing. You were not there, Lucy, that day, and perhaps may not have the book, as Galliard is not a favourite with you.

CHLOE, *by all the pow'rs above,*
To Damon *vow'd eternal Love:*
A roſe adorn'd her ſweeter breaſt;
She on a leaf the vow impreſt:
But Zephyr, by her ſide at play,
Love, vow, *and* leaf, *blew quite away.*

The gentlemen were very lively on the occaſion; and encored it: But I told them, That as they muſt be better pleaſed with the jeſt on our Sex contained in it, than they could be with the muſic, I would not, for the ſake of their own politeneſs, oblige them.

You will favour us, however, with your *Diſcreet Lover*, Miſs Byron, ſaid Mr. Greville. That is a ſong written entirely upon your own principles.

Well then I will give you it, ſaid I, ſet by the ſame hand.

THE DISCREET LOVER.

Ye fair, that would be bleſt in Love,
Take your pride a little lower;
Let the ſwain whom you approve,
Rather like *you, than* adore.

Love,

Love, that riſes into paſſion,
Soon will end in hate or ſtrife:
But from tender inclination,
Flow the laſting *joys of life.*

Theſe two light pieces put the gentlemen into good humour; and a deal of ſilly ſtuff was ſaid to me, by way of compliment, on the occaſion, by Sir Hargrave and Mr. Greville; not one word of which I believed.

The Baronet went away firſt, to go to his concert. He was very cold in his behaviour to me at taking leave, as he had been all the time.

Mr. Greville ſoon after left us, intending to ſet out this morning.

He ſnatched my hand at going. I was afraid of a ſecond ſavage freedom, and would have withdrawn it. —Only one ſigh over it; but one ſigh. Oh! — ſaid he, an Oh, half a yard long—and preſſed it with his lips— But remember, madam, you are watched: I have half a dozen ſpies upon you; and the moment you find the man you can favour, up comes your Greville, cuts a throat, and flies his country.

He ſtopt at the parlour-door— One Letter, Miſs Byron—Receive but one Letter, from me.

No, Mr. Greville: But I wiſh you well.

Wiſhes! that, like the Biſhops bleſſing, coſt you nothing. I was going to ſay *No*, for you: But you were too quick. It had been ſome pleaſure to have denied *myſelf*, and prevented the mortification of a denial from *you*.

He went away; every one wiſhing him a good journey, and ſpeaking favourably of the odd creature. Mrs. Reeves, in particular, thought fit to ſay, that he was the moſt entertaining of all my lovers: But if ſo, what is it they call entertaining? And what are thoſe *others*, whom they call my lovers?

The man, ſaid I, is an immoral man: And had he not got above bluſhes, and above being hurt by

Love, he could not have been ſo gay, and ſo *entertaining*, as you call it.

Miſs Byron ſays true, ſaid Mr. Reeves. I never knew a man who could make a jeſting-matter of the paſſion in the preſence of the object, ſo very deeply in love, as to be hurt by a diſappointment. There ſits my ſaucebox. Did I ever make a jeſt of my Love to you, madam?

No indeed, Sir: Had I not thought you moſt *deplorably* in earneſt, you had not had any of my pity.

Why look you there, Now! That's a declaration in point, Either Mr. Orme, or Mr. Fowler, muſt be the happy man, Miſs Byron.

Indeed, neither.

But why? They have both good eſtates. They both adore you. Sir Hargrave I ſee you cannot have. Mr. Greville dies not for you, tho' he would be glad to live with you. Mr. Fenwick is a ſtill leſs eligible man, I think. Where can you be better than with one of the two I have named?

You ſpeak ſeriouſly, Couſin: I will not anſwer lightly: But neither of thoſe gentlemen can be the man: Yet I eſteem them both becauſe they are good men.

Well, but don't you pity them?

I don't know what to ſay to that: You hold, that pity is but one remove from Love: And to ſay I *pity* a man who profeſſes to love me, becauſe I cannot conſent to be his, carries with it, I think, an air of arrogance, and looks as if I believed he muſt be unhappy without me, when poſſibly there may be hundreds of women, with any one of whom he might be more truly happy.

Well, this is in character from you, Miſs Byron: But may I aſk you now, Which of the two gentlemen, Mr. Orme, or Mr. Fowler, were you obliged to have *one* of them, would you chooſe?

Mr. Orme, I frankly anſwer. Have I not told Mr. Fowler ſo? Well,

Well, then, what are your objections, may I aſk, to Mr. Orme? He is not a diſagreeable man in his perſon. You own that you think him a good man. His ſiſter loves you; and you love her. What is your objection to Mr. Orme?

I don't know what to ſay. I hope I ſhould perform my duty to the man to whom I ſhall give my vows, be he who he will: But I am not in haſte to marry. If a ſingle woman *knows* her own happineſs, ſhe will find that the time from eighteen to twenty-four is the happieſt part of her life. If ſhe ſtay till ſhe *is* twenty-four, ſhe has time to look about her, and if ſhe has more lovers than one, is enabled to chooſe without having reaſon, on looking back, to reproach herſelf for haſtineſs. Her fluttering, her romantic age (we all know ſomething of it, I doubt) is over by twenty-four, or it will hold too long; and ſhe is then fit to take her reſolutions, and to ſettle. I have more than once hinted, that I ſhould be afraid to engage with one who thinks *too highly* of me beforehand. Nothing violent can be laſting, and I could not bear when I had given a man my heart with my hand (and they never ſhall be ſeparated) that he ſhould behave to me with leſs affection than he ſhewed to me before I was his. As I wiſh not *now* to be made an idol of, I may the more reaſonably expect the conſtancy due to friendſhip, and not to be affronted with his indifference after I have given him my whole ſelf. In other words, I could not bear to have my Love ſlighted; or to be deſpiſed for it, inſtead of being encouraged to ſhew it. And how ſhall extravagant paſſion warrant hopes of this nature—if the man be not a man of gratitude, of principle, and a man whoſe love is founded in reaſon, and whoſe object is *mind*, rather than *perſon*?

But Mr. Orme, replied Mr. Reeves, is all this. *Such*, I believe, is his Love.

Be it ſo. But if I cannot love him ſo well as to wiſh to be his (a man, I have heard my Uncle, as

well as Sir Hargrave, ſay, is *his own*; a woman is a *man's*); if I cannot take delight in the thought of bearing my part of the yoke with him; in the belief, that, in caſe of a contrariety of ſentiments, I cannot give up *my* judgment, in points indifferent, from the good opinion, I have of *his*; what but a fondneſs for the ſtate, and an irkſomeneſs in my preſent ſituation, could byas me in favour of *any* man? Indeed, my Couſin, I muſt love the man to whom I would give my hand, well enough to be able, on cool deliberation, to *wiſh* to be his wife; and for *his* ſake (with my whole heart) chooſe to quit the ſingle ſtate, in which I am very happy.

And you are ſure that your indifference to Mr. Orme is not, either directly or indirectly, owing to his obſequious Love of you; and to the *milkineſs of his nature*, as Shakeſpeare calls it?

Very ſure! All the leaning towards him that I have in preference, as I think, to every other man who has beheld me with partiality, is, on the contrary, owing to the grateful ſenſe I have of his reſpect to me, and to the gentleneſs of his nature. Does not my behaviour to Mr. Greville, to Mr. Fenwick, to Sir Hargrave, compared with my treatment of Mr. Orme, and Mr. Fowler, confirm what I ſay?

Then you are, as indeed I have always thought you, a nonſuch of a woman.

Not ſo; your own lady, whom you firſt brought to pity you, as I have heard you ſay, is an inſtance that I am not.

Well, that's true: But is ſhe not, at the ſame time, an example, that pity *melts the ſoul to Love?*

I have no doubt, ſaid Mrs. Reeves, but Miſs Byron may be brought to love the man ſhe can pity.

But, madam, ſaid I, did you not let pity grow into Love, before you married Mr. Reeves?

I believe I did; ſmiling.

Well then I promiſe you, Mr. Reeves, when that comes

comes to be the caſe with me, I will not give pain to a man I can like to marry.

Very well, replied Mr. Reeves: And I dare ſay, that at laſt Mr Orme will be the man. And yet how you will get off with Sir Hargrave, I cannot tell. For Lady Betty Williams, this very day, told me, That he declared to her, he was reſolved you ſhould be his. And ſhe has promiſed him all her intereſt with you, and with us; and is aſtoniſhed that you can refuſe a man of his fortune and addreſs, and who has many, very many, admirers, among people of the firſt rank.

The Baronet is at the door. I ſuppoſe he will expect to ſee me.

Wedneſday Afternoon.

Sir Hargrave is juſt gone. He deſired to talk with me alone. I thought I might very well decline obliging him, as he had never ſcrupled to ſay to me all he had a mind to ſay before my Couſins; and as he had thought himſelf of conſequence enough to behave moodily; and even made *this* requeſt rather with an air of expectation, than of reſpect; and I accordingly deſired to be excuſed. He ſtalked about. My Couſins, firſt one, then the other, withdrew, His behaviour had not been ſo agreeable, as to deſerve this compliance: I was vexed they did.

He offered, as ſoon as they were gone, to take my hand.

I withdrew it.

Madam (ſaid he, very impertinently angry) you would not do thus to Mr. Greville: You would not do thus to *any* man but me.

Indeed, Sir, I would, were I left alone with him.

You ſee, madam, that I cannot forbear viſiting you. My heart and ſoul are devoted to you. I own I have pride. Forgive me; it is piqued. I did not believe I ſhould have been rejected by any Lady, who had no diſlike to a change of condition; and was diſengaged. You declare that you are ſo; and I am

willing, I am deſirous, to believe you.—And yet that Greville—

There he ſtopt, as expecting me to ſpeak.

To what purpoſe, Sir Hargrave, do you expect an anſwer to what you hint about Mr. Greville? It is not my way to behave with incivility to any man who profeſſes a regard for me—

Except to me, Madam—

Self-partiality, Sir, and nothing elſe, could cauſe you to make this exception.

Well, madam, but as to. Mr Greville—

Pray, Sir Hargrave—

And Pray, Miſs Byron—

I have never yet ſeen the man who is to be my huſband.

By G—ſaid the wretch, fiercely (almoſt in the language of Mr. Greville on the like occaſion) but you have—And if you are not engaged in your affections, the *man* is before you.

If this, Sir Hargrave, is all you wanted to ſay to me, and would not be denied ſaying it, it might have been ſaid before my Couſins. I was for leaving him.

You ſhall not go. I beg, madam—Putting himſelf between me and the door.

What further would Sir Hargrave ſay [Standing ſtill, and angry] What further would Sir Hargrave ſay?

Have you, madam, a diſlike to matrimony?

What right have you, Sir, to aſk me this queſtion?

Do you ever intend to enter into the ſtate?

Perhaps I may, if I meet with a man to whom I can give my whole heart.

And cannot that man be I?—Let me implore you, madam. I will kneel to you [And down he dropt on his knees.] I cannot live without you. For God's ſake, madam! Your pity, your mercy, your gratitude, your love! I could not do this before any-body, unleſs aſſured of favour. I implore your favour.

Fooliſh

[Fooliſh man! It was plain, that this kneeling ſupplication was premeditated.]

O Sir, what undue humility!—Could I have received your addreſs, none of this had been neceſſary.

Your pity, madam, once more, your gratitude, your mercy, your love!

Pray, Sir, riſe.

He ſwore by his God, that he would not, till I had given him hope—

No hope can I give you, Sir. It would be cheating, it would be deluding you, it would not be honeſt, to give you hope.

You objected to my morals, madam: Have you any other objection?

Need there any other?

But I can clear myſelf.

To God, and to your conſcience, then do it, Sir. I want you not to clear yourſelf to me.

But, madam, the clearing myſelf to you, would be clearing myſelf to God, and my conſcience.

What language is this, Sir? But you can be nothing to me: Indeed you can be nothing to me—Riſe, Sir; riſe or I leave you.

I made an effort to go. He caught my hand; and aroſe—Then kiſſed it, and held it between both his.

For God's ſake, madam—

Pray, Sir Hargrave—

Your objections? I inſiſt upon knowing your objections. My *perſon*, madam—Forgive me, I am not uſed to boaſt—My *perſon*, madam—

Pray, Sir Hargrave.

—Is not contemptible. My *fortune*—

God bleſs you, Sir, with your fortune.

—Is not inconſiderable. My *morals*—

Pray, Sir Hargrave! Why this enumeration to me?

—Are as unexceptionable as thoſe of moſt young men of faſhion in the preſent age.

[I am ſorry if this be true, thought I to myſelf.]

You have reaſon, I hope, Sir, to be glad of that.

My *deſcent*—

Is honourable, Sir, no doubt.

My *temper* is not bad. I am thought to be a man of vivacity, and of chearfulneſs.—I have *courage*, madam—And this ſhould have been ſeen, had I found reaſon to dread a competitor in your favour.

I thought you were enumerating your *good* qualities, Sir Hargrave.

Courage, madam, magnamity in a man, madam—

Are great qualities, Sir. Courage in a right cauſe, I mean. Magnanimity, you know, Sir, is greatneſs of mind.

And ſo it is; and I hope—

And I, Sir Hargrave, hope you have great reaſon to be ſatisfied with *your*-ſelf: But it would be very grievous to me, if I had not the liberty ſo to act, ſo to govern myſelf, in eſſential points, as ſhould leave me as well ſatisfied with *my*-ſelf.

This, I hope, *may* be the caſe, madam, if you encourage my paſſion: And let me aſſure you, that no man breathing ever loved a woman as I love you. My *perſon*, my *fortune*, my *morals*, my *deſcent*, my *temper* (a man in ſuch a caſe as this may be allowed to do himſelf juſtice) all unexceptionable; let me die if I can account for your—your—your refuſal of me in ſo peremptory, in ſo unceremonious a manner, flap-daſh, as I may ſay, and not one objection to make, or which you will condeſcend to make!

You ſay, Sir, that you love me above all women: Would you, *can* you, be ſo little nice, as to wiſh to marry a woman who does not prefer you to all men? —If you *are*, let me tell you, Sir, that you have aſſigned a reaſon againſt yourſelf, which I think I ought to look upon as concluſive.

I make no doubt, madam, that my behaviour to you after marriage, will induce you, in gratitude as well as juſtice, to prefer me to all men Your

Your behaviour *after* marriage, Sir!—Never will I truſt to that, where—

Where what, madam?

No need of entering into particulars, Sir. You ſee that we cannot be of the ſame mind. You, Sir Hargrave, have no doubt of your *merit*.—

I know, madam, that I ſhould make it the buſineſs as well as pleaſure of my life, to deſerve you.

You value yourſelf upon your *fortune*, Sir—

Only as it gives me power to make you happy.

Riches never yet, of themſelves, made any-body happy. I have already as great a fortune as I wiſh for. You think yourſelf *polite*.—

Polite, madam!—And I hope—

The whole of what I mean, Sir Hargrave, is this: You have a very high opinion of yourſelf: You may have reaſon for it; ſince you muſt know yourſelf, and your own heart, better than I can pretend to do: But would you, let me aſk you, make choice of a woman for a wife, who frankly owns, that ſhe cannot think ſo highly, as you imagine ſhe *ought* to think of you?—In juſtice to yourſelf, Sir—

By my ſoul, madam, haughtily, you are the only woman who could thus—

Well, Sir, perhaps I am. But will not this ſingularity convince you, that I can never make you happy, nor you me? You tell me, that you think highly of me; but if I cannot think ſo highly of you, pray, Sir, let me be intitled to the ſame freedom in my refuſal that governs you in your choice.

He walk'd about the room; and gave himſelf airs that ſhewed greater inward than even outward emotion.

I had a mind to leave him; yet was not willing to withdraw abruptly, intending, and hoping, to put an end to all his expectations for the future. I therefore in a manner aſked for leave to withdraw.

I preſume, Sir, that nothing remains to be ſaid but what

what may be ſaid before my Couſins. And, courteſying, was going.

He told me with a paſſionate air, that he was half-diſtracted; and complained of the uſe I made of the power I had over him. And as I had near opened the door, he threw himſelf on his knees to me againſt it, and undeſignedly hurt my finger with the lock.

He was grieved. I made light of it, tho' in pain, that he might not have an opportunity to flouriſh upon it, and to ſhew a tenderneſs which I doubt is not very natural to him.

How little was I affected with *his* kneeling, to what I was with the ſame poſture in Sir Rowland! Sir Hargrave ſupplicated me as before. I was forced in anſwer to repeat ſome of the ſame things that I had ſaid before.

I would fain have parted civilly. He would not permit me to do ſo. Though he was on his knees, he mingled paſſion, and even indirect menaces, with his ſupplications. I was forced to declare, that I never more would receive his viſits.

This declaration he vowed would make him deſperate, and he cared not what became of him.

I often begged him to riſe; but to no purpoſe, till I declared that I would ſtay no longer with him: And then he aroſe, rapt out an oath or two; again called me proud and ungrateful; and followed me into the other room to my Couſins. He could hardly be civil to them: He walked two or three turns about the room: At laſt, Forgive me, Mr. Reeves, forgive me, Mrs. Reeves, ſaid he, bowing to them; more ſtiffly to me—And you *forbid* my future viſits, madam, ſaid he, with a face of malice.

I do, Sir; and that for both our ſakes. You have greatly diſcompoſed me.

Next time, madam, I have the honour of attending you, it will be, I hope—[He ſtopt a moment, but ſtill looking fiercely] to a happier purpoſe. And away he went.

Mr.

Mr. Reeves was offended with him, and diſcouraged me not in my reſolution to avoid receiving his future viſits. You will now therefore hear very little farther in my Letters of this Sir Hargrave Pollexfen.

And yet I wiſh I do not ſee him very ſoon. But it will be in company enough, if I do: At the Maſquerade, I mean, to-morrow night; for he never miſſes going to ſuch entertainments.

OUR dreſſes are ready. Mr. Reeves is to be a Hermit; Mrs. Reeves a Nun; Lady Betty a Lady Abbeſs: But I by no means like mine, becauſe of its gaudineſs: The very *thing* I was afraid of.

They call it the dreſs of an Arcadian Princeſs: But it falls not in with any of my notions of the Paſtoral dreſs of Arcadia.

A white Paris net ſort of a cap, glittering with ſpangles, and incircled by a chaplet of artificial flowers, with a little white feather perking from the left ear, is to be my head-dreſs.

My maſque is Venetian.

My hair is to be complimented with an appearance, becauſe of its natural ringlets, as they call my curls, and to ſhade my neck.

Tucker and ruffles blond lace.

My ſhape is alſo ſaid to be conſulted in this dreſs. A kind of waiſtcoat of blue ſattin trimmed with ſilver Point d'Eſpagne, the ſkirts edged with ſilver fringe, is made to ſit cloſe to my waiſt by double claſps, a ſmall ſilver taſſel at the end of each claſp; all ſet off with bugles and ſpangles, which make a mighty glitter.

But I am to be allowed a kind of ſcarf of white Perſian ſilk; which, gathered at the top, is to be faſtened to my ſhoulders, and to fly looſe behind me.

Bracelets on my arms.

They would have given me a crook; but I would not ſubmit to that. It would give me, I ſaid, an air of

of confidence to aim to manage it with any tolerable freedom; and I was apprehenſive, that I ſhould not be thought to want *that* from the dreſs itſelf. A large Indian fan was not improper for the expected warmth of the place; and that contented me.

My petticoat is of blue ſattin, trimmed and fringed as my waiſtcoat. I am not to have a hoop that is perceivable. They wore not hoops in Arcadia.

What a ſparkling figure ſhall I make! Had the Ball been what they call a Subſcription Ball, at which people dreſs with more glare than at a common one, this dreſs would have been more tolerable.

But they all ſay, that I ſhall be kept in countenance by maſques as extravagant, and even more ridiculous.

Be that as it may, I wiſh the night was over. I dare ſay, it will be the laſt diverſion of this kind I ever ſhall be at; for I never had any notion of Maſquerades.

Expect particulars of all in my next. I reckon you will be impatient for them. But pray, my Lucy, be fanciful, as I ſometimes am, and let me know how you think every-thing will be beforehand; and how many Pretty-fellows you imagine, in this dreſs, will be ſlain by

Your HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. REEVES, *To* GEORGE SELBY, *Eſq.*

Dear Mr. Selby, *Friday, Feb.* 17.

NO one, at preſent, but yourſelf, muſt ſee the contents of what I am going to write.

You muſt not be too much ſurpriſed.

But how ſhall I tell you the news; the dreadful news?—My wife has been ever ſince three this morning in violent hyſterics upon it.

You muſt not—But how ſhall I ſay, *You* muſt not,

be

be too much affected, when *we* are unable to ſupport ourſelves?

O my couſin Selby!—We know not what is become of our deareſt Miſs Byron!

I will be as particular as my grief and ſurprize will allow. There is a neceſſity for it, as you will find.

Mr. Greville, as I apprehend—But to particulars firſt.

We were laſt night at the Ball in the Hay-market.

The chairmen who carried the dear creature, and who, as well as *our* chairmen, were engaged for the night, were inveigled away to drink ſomewhere. They promiſed Wilſon, my Couſin's ſervant, to return in half an hour.

It was then but little more than twelve.

Wilſon waited near two hours, and they not returning, he hired a chair to ſupply their place.

Between two and three, we all agreed to go home. The dear creature was fatigued with the notice every-body took of her. Every-body admired her. She wanted to go before; but Lady Betty prevailed on her to ſtay a little longer.

I waited on her to her chair, and ſaw her in it before I attended Lady Betty and my wife to theirs.

I ſaw that neither the chair, nor the chairmen, were thoſe who brought her. I aſked the meaning; and received the above particulars after ſhe was in the chair.

She hurried into it becauſe of her dreſs, and being warm, and no leſs than four gentlemen following her to the very chair.

It was then near three.

I ordered Wilſon to bid the chairmen ſtop when they had got out of the croud, till Lady Betty's chair and mine, and my wife's, joined them.

I ſaw her chair move, and Wilſon with his lighted flambeaux before it; and the four maſques who followed her to the chair return into the houſe.

When

When our ſervants could not find that her chair had ſtopt, we ſuppoſed that in the hurry, the fellow heard not my orders; and directed our chairmen to proceed; not doubting but we ſhould find her got home before us.

We had before agreed to be carried directly home; declining Lady Betty's invitation to reſume our own dreſſes at her houſe, where we dreſſed for the Ball.

We were very much ſurpriſed at finding her not arrived: But concluding, that, by miſtake, ſhe was carried to Lady Betty's, and was there expecting us, we ſent thither immediately.

But, good God! what was our conſternation, when the ſervants brought us word back, that Lady Betty had not either ſeen or heard of her!

Mr. Greville, as I apprehend—

But let me give you all the lights on which I ground my ſurmiſes.

Laſt night Lady Betty Williams had a hint given her, as ſhe informed me at the Maſquerade, that Mr. Greville, who took leave of my Couſin on Tueſday evening in order to ſet out for Northamptonſhire the next morning, was neither gone, nor intended to go; being, on the contrary, reſolved to continue in town perdue, in order to watch my Couſin's viſiters.

He had indeed told her, that ſhe would have half a dozen ſpies upon her; and threw out ſome hints of jealouſy of two of her viſiters.

Sir Hargrave Pollexſen in a Harlequin dreſs was at the Ball: He ſoon diſcover'd our lovely Couſin, and notwithſtanding his former ill-nature on being rejected by her, addreſſed her with the politeneſs of a man accuſtomed to publick places.

He found me out at the ſide-board a little before we went off; and aſked me, if I had not ſeen Mr. Greville there? I ſaid, No.

He aſked me, if I had not obſerved a maſque diſtinguiſhed by a broad brimmed half-ſlouched hat, with a high

high flat crown, a ſhort black cloak, a dark lantern in his hand, holding it up to every one's maſque; and who, he ſaid, was ſaluted by every-body as Guido Vaux? That perſon he ſaid was Mr. Greville.

I did indeed obſerve this perſon; but recollected not, that he had the air of Mr. Greville; but thought him a much more bulky man. But that, as he intended to have it ſuppoſed he had left the town, might be eaſily managed.

Mr. Greville, you know, is a man of enterprize.

He came to town, having profeſſedly no other material buſineſs but to give obſtruction to my Couſin's viſiters. He ſaw ſhe had two new ones. He talked at firſt of ſtaying in town, and partaking of its diverſions, and even of beſpeaking a new equipage.

But all of a ſudden, tho' expecting Mr. Fenwick would come up, he pretended to leave the town, and to ſet out directly for Northamptonſhire, without having obtained any Conceſſion from my Couſin in his favour.

Laying all theſe circumſtances together, I think it is hardly to be doubted, but Mr. Greville is at the bottom of this black affair.

You will therefore take ſuch ſteps on theſe lights as your prudence will ſuggeſt to you. If Mr. Greville is not come down—If Mr. Fenwick—what would I ſay?

The leſs noiſe, however, the affair makes, till we can come at certainty, the better.

How I dread what that certainty may be!—Dear creature!

But I am ſure you will think it adviſeable to keep this dreadful affair from her poor grandmother. And I hope your good lady—Yet *her* prudent advice may be neceſſary.

I have ſix people out at different parts of the town, who are to make enquiries among chairmen, coachmen, &c.

Her

Her new ſervant cannot be a villain—What can one ſay?—What can one think?

We have ſent to his Siſter, who keeps an inn in Smithfield. She has heard nothing of him.

I have ſent after the chairmen who carried her to this curſed Maſquerade. Lady Betty's chairmen, who had provided the chairs, knew them, and their number. They were traced with a fare from White's to Berkeley-ſquare.

Something may be diſcovered by means of thoſe fellows, if they were tampered with. They are afraid, I ſuppoſe, to come to demand their but half-earned money. Woe be to them if they come out to be raſcals!

I had half a ſuſpicion of Sir Hargrave, as well from the character given us of him by a friend of mine, as becauſe of his unpolite behaviour to the dear creature on her rejecting him: And ſent to his houſe in Cavendiſh-Square, to know if he were at home; and if he were, at what time he returned from the Ball.

Anſwer was brought, that he was in bed, and they ſuppoſed would not be ſtirring till dinner-time, when he expected company: And that he returned not from the Ball till between four and five this morning.

We ſent to Mr. Greville's lodgings. He has actually diſcharged them; and the people think (as he told them ſo) that he is ſet out for the country. But he is maſter of contrivances enough to manage this. There can be no thought that he would give out otherwiſe to them, than he did to us. Happy! had we found him not gone.

Mr. Greville *muſt* be the man!

You will be ſo good, as to diſpatch the bearer inſtantly with what information can be got about Mr. Greville.

Ever, ever Yours!

ARCHIBALD REEVES.

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. SELBY, *To* ARCHIBALD REEVES, *Eſq.*

In anſwer to the preceding.

Saturday, Feb. 18.

O Mr. Reeves!—Dear ſweet child!—Flower of the world!—

But how could I keep ſuch dreadful tidings within my own breaſt?—

How could I conceal my conſternation?—My wife ſaw it. She would know the cauſe of it.

I could not tell her the fatal news—Fatal news indeed! It will be immediate death to her poor Grandmother—

We muſt keep it from her as long as we can!—But *keep* it from her!—And *is* the deareſt creature ſpirited away?—O Mr. Reeves!—

I gave my wife your Letter. She fainted away, before ſhe had read it thro'.

Maſquerades, I have generally heard ſaid, were more ſilly than wicked: But they are now, I am convinced, the moſt profligate of all diverſions.

Almoſt diſtracted, Couſin!—You may well be ſo: We ſhall all be *quite* diſtracted—Dear, dear creature! What may ſhe have not ſuffered by this time?

Why parted we with ſuch a jewel out of our ſight?

You *would* not be denied: You *would* have her to that curſed town.

Some damn'd villain, to be ſure!—Greville it is not.

Greville was ſeen late laſt night, alighting at his own houſe from a poſt-chaiſe. He had nobody with him.

In half an hour, late as it was, he ſent his compliments to us to let us know that he had left the dear child well, and (in his uſual ſtile) happier than ſhe would make him. He knows that our lives are bound up in hers.

Find

Find out where ſhe is: And find her ſafe and well: Or we will never forgive thoſe who were the cauſe of her going to London.

Dear ſoul! She was over perſuaded!—She was not fond of going!

The ſweeteſt, obliging creature!—What is now become of her!—What by this time may ſhe not have ſuffered!—

Search every-where—But you will, no doubt!—Suſpect every-body—This Lady Betty Williams—Such a plot muſt have a woman in it. Was ſhe not Sir Hargrave's friend?—This Sir Hargrave—Greville it could not be. Had we not the proof I mentioned, Greville, bad as he is, could not be ſuch a villain.

The firſt moment you have any tidings, bad or good, ſpare no expence—

***

GREVILLE was this moment here.

We could not ſee him. We did not let him know the matter.

He is gone away, in great ſurprize, on the ſervants telling him that we had received ſome bad news, which made us unfit to ſee any-body. The ſervants could not tell him what: Yet they all gueſs by your livery, and by our grief, that ſomething has befallen their beloved young lady. They are all in tears—And they look at us, when they attend us, with *ſuch* inquiſitive, yet ſilent grief!—We are ſpeechleſs before them; and tell them our wills by motions, and not by words.

Good God!—After ſo many happy years!—Happy in ourſelves! to be at laſt in ſo ſhort a time made the moſt miſerable of wretches!

But this had not been, if—But no more—Good God of heaven, what will become of poor Mrs. Shirley!—Lucy, Nancy, will go diſtracted—But no more—Haſten your next—And forgive this diſtracted letter. I know not what I have written. But I am

Yours, GEORGE SELBY.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. REEVES, *To* GEORGE SELBY, *Eſq.*

In Continuation of Letter XXIII.

LADY Betty's chairmen have found out the firſt chairmen.

The fellows were made almoſt dead drunk. They are ſure ſomething was put into their liquor. They have been hunting after the footmen, who enticed them, and drank them down. They deſcribe their livery to be brown, trimmed and turned up with yellow; and are in the ſervice of a merchant's relict, who lives either in Mark-lane, or Mincing lane; they forgot which; but have not yet been able to find them out. Their Lady, they ſaid, was at the Maſquerade. They were very officious to ſcrape acquaintance with them. We know not any-body who gives this livery: So no lights can be obtained by this part of the information. A curſed deep-laid villany!—The fellows are reſolved, they ſay, to find out theſe footmen, if above ground; and the chairmen who were hired on their failure.

Every hour we have one meſſenger or other returning with ſomething to ſay; but hitherto with nothing to the purpoſe. This has kept me within. O Mr. Selby, I know not what to direct! I know not what to do! I ſend them out again as faſt as they return: Yet rather ſhew my deſpair, than my hope.

Surely this villany muſt be Mr. Greville's. Tho' I have but juſt diſpatched away my ſervant to you, I am impatient for his return.

I will write every hour, as any-thing offers, that I may have a Letter ready to ſend you by another man, the moment we hear any thing. And yet I expect not to hear any-thing material, but from you.

We

We begin to ſuſpect the ſervant (that Wilſon) whom my Couſin ſo lately hired. Were *he* clear of the matter, either he, or the chairmen he hired, muſt have been heard of. He would have returned. They could not all three be either murdered or ſecreted.

Theſe curſed Maſquerades!—Never will I—

***

O Mr. Selby! Her ſervant is, muſt be a villain!—Sarah, my dear Couſin's ſervant (My poor wife can think of nothing. She is extremely ill) Sarah took it into her head to have the ſpecious raſcal's trunk broke open. It felt light, and he had talked, but the night before, of his ſtock of cloaths and linen, to the other ſervants. There was nothing of value found in it; not of *ſix*-pence value. The moſt ſpecious villain, if a villain. Every-body liked him. The dear creature herſelf was pleaſed with him. He knew every-thing and every-body—Curſed be he for his adroitneſs and knowlege! We had made too many enquiries after a ſervant for her.

Eleven o'Clock.

I AM juſt returned from Smithfield. From the villain's Siſter. He comes out to be a villain—This Wilſon I mean—A practiſed villain!

The woman ſhook her head at the enquiry which I made, half out of breath, after what was become of him. She was afraid, ſhe ſaid, that all was not right: But was ſure her brother had not robbed.

He had been guilty, I ſaid, of a villany that was a thouſand times worſe than robbery.

She was inquiſitive about it; and I hinted to her what it was.

Her brother, ſhe ſaid, was a young man of parts and underſtanding, and would be glad, ſhe was ſure, of getting a livelihood by honeſt ſervices. It was a ſad thing that there ſhould be ſuch maſters in the world, as would put ſervants upon bad practices.

I aſked after the character of that Bagenhall, whoſe ſervice

ſervice her Brother laſt lived in? and imprudently I threatened her Brother.

Ah, Sir! was all the anſwer ſhe made, ſhaking her head.

I repeated my queſtion, Who was that Bagenhall?—

Excuſe me, Sir, ſaid ſhe. I will give no other anſwer, till I hear whether my Brother's life may be in danger or not. She abhorred, ſhe ſaid, all baſe practices as much as any-body could do; and ſhe was ſorry for the Lady, and for me.

I then offered to be the making of her Brother, were it poſſible to engage him before any violence was done to the Lady. I aſked, If ſhe knew where to ſend to him?

Indeed ſhe did not. She dared to ſay, ſhe ſhould not hear of him for one while. Whenever he had been drawn in to aſſiſt in any out-of-the-way pranks [ſee, Mr. Selby, a practiſed villain!] he kept away from her till all was blown over. Thoſe who would take ſuch ſteps, ſhe feared, would by this time have done the miſchief.

How I raved!

I offered her money, a handſome ſum, If ſhe would tell me what ſhe knew of that Bagenhall, or of any of her Brother's employers: But ſhe refuſed to ſay one word more, till ſhe knew whether her Brother's life were likely to be affected or not.

I left her, and haſtened home, to enquire after what might have happened in my abſence: But will ſoon ſee her again, in hopes ſhe may be wrought upon to drop ſome hints, by which ſomething may be diſcovered—But all this time, What may be the fate of the dear ſufferer!— I cannot bear my own thoughts!

Lady Betty is inexpreſſibly grieved—

I have diſpatched a man and horſe (God knows to what purpoſe) to a friend I have at Reading, to get him to enquire after the character of this Bagenhall.

There is ſuch a man, and he is a man of pleaſure, as Sir John Alleſtree informs me—Accurſed villain, this Wilſon! He could not bear with his maſter's conſtant bad hours, and profligate courſe of life, as he told our ſervants, and Mrs. Sarah!—Specious impoſtor!

One o'Clock.

LADY Betty's chairmen have found out, and thus brought with them, one of the fellows whom that vile Wilſon hired. The other was afraid to come. I have ſecured this fellow: Yet he ſeems to be ingenuous; and I have promiſed, that if he prove innocent, he ſhall be rewarded inſtead of being puniſhed; and the two chairmen, on this promiſe, are gone to try to prevail upon his partner to come, were it but to releaſe the other, as both inſiſted upon their innocence.

And now will you be impatient to know what account this fellow gives.

O Mr. Selby! The dear, dear creature—But before I can proceed, I muſt recover my eyes.

Two o'clock.

THIS fellow's name is Macpherſon. His partner's Mc Dermot. This is Macpherſon's accouut of the matter.

Wilſon hired them to carry his young Lady to Paddington—To Paddington! A vile dog!—

They objected diſtance and danger; the latter, as Macpherſon owns, to heighten the value of the ſervice.

As to the danger, Wilſon told him, they would be met by three others of his fellow-ſervants, armed, at the firſt fields: And as to the diſtance, they would be richly rewarded; and he gave them a crown apiece earneſt, and treated them beſides with brandy.

To prevent their curioſity, and entirely to remove their difficulties, the villain told them, that his young Lady was an heireſs, and had agreed to go off from the Maſquerade with her Lover: But that the gentleman

man would not appear to them till ſhe came to the very houſe, to which ſhe was to be conveyed.

She thinks, ſaid the helliſh villain, that ſhe is to be carried to May-Fair Chapel, and to be married directly; and that the miniſter (unſeaſonable as the hour is) will be there in readineſs. But the gentleman, who is a man of the utmoſt honour, intends firſt to try whether he cannot obtain her friends conſent. So when ſhe finds her way lengthened, proceeded the vile wretch, ſhe will perhaps be frightened, and will aſk me queſtions. I would not for the world diſoblige her; but here ſhe muſt be cheated for her own ſake; and when all is over, will value me the more for the innocent impoſture. But whatever orders ſhe may give you, obſerve none but mine, and follow me. You ſhall be richly rewarded, repeated the miſcreant. Should ſhe even cry out, mind it not: She is full of fears, and hardly holds in one mind for an hour together.

He farther cautioned them not to anſwer any queſtions which might poſſibly be aſked of them, by the perſon who ſhould conduct his young Lady to her chair; but refer to himſelf: And in caſe any other chairs were to go in company with hers, he bid them fall behind, and follow his flambeaux.

Macpherſon ſays, that ſhe drew the curtains cloſe (becauſe of her dreſs, no doubt) the moment I had left her, after ſeeing her in the chair.

The fellows, thus prepoſſeſſed and inſtructed, ſpeeded away, without ſtopping for our chairs. Yet my Couſin muſt have heard me give that direction.

They had carried her a great way before ſhe called out: And *then* ſhe called three times before they would hear her: At the third time they ſtopt, and her ſervant aſked her commands. Where am I, William, ſaid ſhe? Juſt at home, madam, anſwered he. Surely you have taken a ſtrange round-about way. We *are*

come about, ſaid the raſcal, on purpoſe to avoid the croud of chairs and coaches.

They proceeded onwards, and were joined by three men, as Wilſon had told them they would; but they fanſied one of them to be a gentleman; for he was muffled up in a cloak, and had a ſilver-hilted ſword in his hand: But he ſpake not. He gave no directions: And all three kept aloof, that they might not be ſeen by her.

At Maribone, ſhe again called out; William, William, ſaid ſhe, with vehemence: The Lord have mercy upon me! Where are you going to carry me? Chairmen, ſtop! Stop, chairmen! Set me down!—William!—Call my ſervant, chairmen!—

Dear ſoul! Her ſervant! Her devil!

The chairmen called him. They lifted up the head. The ſide-curtains were ſtill drawn, and Mc Dermot ſtood ſo cloſe, that ſhe could not ſee far before her. Did you not tell me, ſaid the villain to them, that it was not far about?—See how you have frighted my Lady!—Madam, we are now almoſt at home.

They proceeded with her, ſaying, they had indeed miſtaken their way; but they were juſt there and hurried on.

She then undrew the ſide-curtains—Good God of heaven protect me! they heard her ſay—I am in the midſt of fields—They were then at Liſſom-Green.

They heard her pray; and Macpherſon ſaid, He began then to conclude, that the Lady was too much frightened, and *too pious* to be in a Love-plot.

But, nevertheleſs, beckonedby their villanous guide, they hurried on: And then ſhe ſcreamed out, and happening to ſee one of the three men, ſhe begged his help for God's ſake.

The fellow bluſtered at the chairmen, and bid them ſtop. She aſked for Groſvenor-ſtreet. She was to be carried, ſhe ſaid, to Groſvenor-ſtreet.

She was juſt there, that fellow ſaid—It can't be, Sir!

Sir! it can't be!—Don't I ſee fields all about me?—I am in the midſt of fields, Sir.

Groſvenor-ſquare, madam, replied that villain; the trees and garden of Groſvenor-ſquare.

What a ſtrange way have you come about, cried her miſcreant! And then trod out his flambeau; while another fellow took the chairmen's lantern from them; and they had only a little glimmering ſtar light to guide them.

She then, poor dear ſoul! ſcreamed ſo diſmally, that Macpherſon ſaid, it went to his heart to hear her. But they following Wilſon, who told them they were juſt *landed*, that was his word, he led them up a long garden-walk, by a back way. One of the three men having got before, opened the garden-door, and held it in his hand; and by the time they got to the houſe to which the garden ſeemed to belong, the dear creature ceaſed ſcreaming.

They too well ſaw the cauſe, when they ſtopt with her. She was in a fit.

Two women, by the aſſiſtance of the perſon in the cloak, helped her out, with great ſeeming tenderneſs. They ſaid ſomething in praiſe of her Beauty, and expreſſed themſelves concerned for her, as if they were afraid ſhe was paſt recovery: Which apparently ſtartled the man in the cloak.

Wilſon entered the houſe with thoſe who carried in the dear creature; but ſoon came out to the chairmen. They ſaw the man in the cloak (who hung about the villain, and hugged him, as in joy) give the raſcal money; who then put a guinea into each of their hands; and conveyed them thro' the garden again, to the door at which they entered; but refuſed them light, even ſo much as that of their own candle and lantern. However, he ſent another man with them, who led them over rough and dirty by-ways into a path that pointed London-ward; but plainly ſo much about with

deſign to make it difficult for them to find out the place again.

* *

The other fellow is brought hither. He tells exactly the ſame ſtory.

I aſked of both, what ſort of a man he in the cloak was: But he ſo carefully muffled himſelf up, and ſo little appeared to them, either walking after them, or at the houſe, that I could gain no light from their deſcription.

On their promiſe to be forth-coming, I have ſuffered them to go with Lady Betty's chairmen to try if they can trace out their own footſteps, and find the place.

How many hopeleſs things muſt a man do, in an exigence, who knows not what is right to be done!

* *

I HAVE enquired of Lady Betty, Who it was that told her, Mr. Greville was not gone out of town, but intended to lie perdue; and ſhe named her informant. I aſked how the diſcourſe came in? She owned, a little aukwardly. I aſked whether that Lady knew Mr. Greville? She could not ſay whether ſhe did, or not.

I went to that Lady: Mrs. Preſton, in New Bond-ſtreet. She had her intelligence, ſhe told me, from Sir Hargrave Pollexfen; who had hinted to her, that he ſhould take ſuch notice of Mr. Greville, as might be attended with conſequences; and ſhe was the readier to intimate this to Lady Betty, in order to prevent miſchief.

Now, Mr. Selby, as the intimation that the dark-lantern figure at the Maſquerade was Mr. Greville, came from Sir Hargrave, and nobody elſe; and we ſaw nothing of him ourſelves; how do we know—And yet Mr. Greville intended that we ſhould believe him to be out of town.—Yet even that intimation came from Sir Hargrave—And furthermore, was it not

not likely that he would take as much care to conceal himſelf from Sir Hargrave, as from us?—But I will go inſtantly to Sir Hargrave's houſe. He was to dine at home, and with company. If I cannot ſee him; If he ſhould be abſent—But no more till I return.

* *

O Mr. Selby! I believe I have wronged Mr. Greville. The dear ſoul, I am afraid, is fallen into even worſe hands than his.

I went to Sir Hargrave's houſe. He was *not* at home. He *was* at home. He had company with him. He was not to be ſpoken with. Theſe were the different anſwers given me by his porter, with as much confuſion as I had impatience; and yet it was evident to me, that he had his leſſon given him. In ſhort, I have reaſon to think, that Sir Hargrave came not home all night. The man in the cloak, I doubt, was he. Now does all that Sir John Allestree ſaid of the malicious wickedneſs of this deviliſh man, and his arrogant behaviour to our dear Miſs Byron, on her rejecting him, come freſh into my memory. And is ſhe, can ſhe be, fallen into the power of ſuch a man?—Rather, much rather, may my firſt ſurmiſes prove true. Greville is ſurely (exceptionable as he is) a better man, at leaſt a better-natured man, than this; and he can have no thoughts leſs honourable than marriage: But this villain, if he *be* the villain—I cannot, I dare not, purſue the thought.

* *

The four chairmen are juſt returned. They think they have found the place; but having gained ſome intelligence (intelligence which diſtracts me!) they hurried back for directions.

They had aſked a neighbouring alehouſe-keeper, if there were not a long garden (belonging to the houſe they ſuſpected) and a back-door out of it to a dirty lane and fields. He anſwered in the affirmative. The front of this houſe faces the road.

They called for ſome hot liquors; and aſked the landlord after the owners. He knew nothing of harm of them, he ſaid. They had lived there near a twelvemonth in reputation. The family conſiſted of a widow, whoſe name is Awberry, her ſon, and two daughters. The ſon (a man of about thirty years of age) has a place in the Cuſtom-houſe, and only came down on a Saturday, and went up on Monday. But an odd circumſtance, he ſaid, had alarmed him that very morning.

He was at firſt a little ſhy of telling what it was. He loved, he ſaid, to mind his own buſineſs: What other people did was nothing to him: But, at laſt, he told them, that about ſix o'clock in the morning he was waked by the trampling of horſes; and looking out of his window, ſaw a chariot-and-ſix, and three or four men on horſeback, at the widow Awberry's door. He got up. The footmen and coachmen were very *huſh*, not calling for a drop of liquor, tho' his doors were open: A rare inſtance, he ſaid, where there were ſo many men-ſervants together, and a coachman one of them. This, he ſaid, could not but give a greater edge to his curioſity.

About ſeven o'clock, one of the widow's daughters came to the door, with a lighted candle in her hand, and directed the chariot to drive up cloſe to the houſe. The alehouſe-keeper then ſlipt into an arbour-like porch, next door to the widow's; where he had not been three minutes before he ſaw two perſons come to the door; the one a tall gentleman in laced cloaths, who had his arms about the other, a perſon of middling ſtature, wrapt up in a ſcarlet cloak; and reſiſting, as one in great diſtreſs, the other's violence, and begging not to be put into the chariot, in a voice and accent that evidently ſhewed it was a woman.

The gentleman made vehement proteſtations of honour; but lifted the Lady into the chariot. She ſtruggled, and ſeemed to be in agonies of grief; and

on

on being lifted in, and the gentleman going in after her, ſhe ſcreamed out for help; and he obſerved in the ſtruggling, that ſhe had on, under her cloak, a ſilver-laced habit [The Maſquerade habit, no doubt!]: Her ſcreaming grew fainter and fainter, and her voice ſounded to him as if her mouth were ſtopped: And the gentleman ſeemed to ſpeak high, as if he threatened her.

Away drove the chariot. The ſervants rode after it.

In about half an hour, a coach and four came to the widow's door; the widow and her two daughters went into it, and it took the ſame road.

The alehouſe-keeper had afterwards the curioſity to aſk the maid-ſervant, an ignorant country wench, whither her miſtreſſes went ſo early in the morning? She anſwered they were gone to Windſor, or that way, and would not return, ſhe believed, in a week.

O this damn'd Sir Hargrave! He has a houſe upon the foreſt. I have no doubt but he is the villain. Who knows what injuries ſhe might have ſuſtained before ſhe was forced into the chariot?—God give me patience! Dear ſoul! Her prayers! Her ſtruggling! Her crying out for help! Her mouth ſtopt! O the villain!

I have ordered as many men and horſes as two of my friends can furniſh me with, to be added to two of my own (we ſhall be nine in all) to get ready with all ſpeed. I will purſue the villain to the world's end, but I will find him.

Our firſt courſe ſhall be to his houſe at Windſor. If we find him not there, we will proceed to that Bagenhall's, near Reading.

It would be but loſing time, were I to go now to Paddington. And when the vile widow and her daughters are gone from home, and only an ignorant wench left, what can we learn of her more than is already told us.

I have, however, accepted Lady Betty's offer of her

ſteward's going with the two chairmen, to get what farther intelligence he can from Paddington, againſt my return.

I ſhall take what I have written with me, to form from it a letter leſs hurrying, leſs alarming, for your peruſal, than this that I have written at ſuch ſnatches of time, and under ſuch dreadful uncertainties, would be to you, were I to ſend it; that is to ſay, if I have time, and if am able to write with any certainty—— O that dreaded certainty!

At four in the morning the ſix men I borrow, and myſelf, and two of my ſervants, well armed, are to rendezvous at Hyde-Park Corner. It is grievous that another night muſt paſs. But ſo many people cannot be got together as two or three might.

My poor wife has made me promiſe to take the aſſiſtance of peace-officers, where-ever I find either the villain, or the ſuffering angel.

Where the road parts we ſhall divide, and enquire at every turnpike; and ſhall agree upon our places of meeting.

I am haraſſed to death: But my mind is the greateſt ſufferer.

* *

O MY dear Mr. Selby! We *have* tidings—God be praiſed, we have tidings—Not ſo happy indeed as were to be wiſhed: Yet the dear creature is living, and in honourable hands—God be praiſed!

Read the incloſed Letter directed to me.

SIR,

MISS Byron is in ſafe and honourable hands. The firſt moment ſhe could give any account of herſelf, ſhe beſought me to quiet your heart, and your Lady's, with this information.

She has been cruelly treated.

Particulars, at preſent, ſhe cannot give.

She was many hours ſpeechleſs.

But

But don't fright yourſelves: Her fits, tho' not leſs frequent, are weaker and weaker.

The bearer will acquaint you who my Brother is; to whom you owe the preſervation and ſafety of the loveliеſt woman in England; and he will direct you to a houſe where you will be welcome with your Lady (for Miſs Byron cannot be removed) to convince yourſelves that all poſſible care is taken of her, by Sir,

Friday, Feb. 17. *Your humble Servant,*
CHARLOTTE GRANDISON.

In fits!—Has been cruelly treated!—Many hours ſpeechleſs!—Cannot be removed!—Her ſolicitude, tho' hardly herſelf, *for our eaſe*!—Deareſt, dear creature!—But you will rejoice with me, my Couſins, that ſhe is in ſuch honourable hands.

What I have written muſt now go. I have no time to tranſcribe.

I have ſent to my two friends to let them know, that I ſhall not have occaſion for their people's aſſiſtance.

She is at a nobleman's houſe, the Earl of L. near Colnebrook.

My wife, haraſſed and fatigued in mind as ſhe has been on this occaſion, and poorly in health, wanted to go with me: But it is beſt firſt for me to ſee how the dear creature is.

I ſhall ſet out before day, on horſeback. My ſervant ſhall carry with him a portmanteau of things, ordered by my wife. My Couſin muſt have made a ſtrange appearance in her Maſquerade dreſs, to her deliverer.

The honeſt man who brought the letter [He looks remarkably ſo; but had he a leſs agreeable countenance, he would have been received by us as an angel, for his happy tidings] was but juſt returned from Windſor, whither he had been ſent early in the morning, to tranſact ſome buſineſs, when he was diſpatched

away to us with the welcome Letter. He could not therefore be ſo particular as we wiſhed him. What he gathered was from the houſekeeper; the men-ſervants, who were in the fray [A fray there was!] being gone to town with their maſter. But what we learnt from him, is, briefly, as follows:

His maſter is Sir Charles Grandiſon; a gentleman who has not been long in England. I have often heard mention of his Father, Sir Thomas, who died not long ago. This honeſt man knew not when to ſtop in his maſter's praiſe. He gives his young Lady alſo an excellent character.

Sir Charles was going to town in his chariot and ſix when he met (moſt happily met!) our diſtreſſed Couſin.

Sir Hargrave *is* the villain.

I am heartily ſorry for ſuſpecting Mr. Greville.

Sir Charles had earneſt buſineſs in town; and he proceeded thither, after he had reſcued the dear creature, and committed her to the care of his Siſter.—God for ever bleſs him!

The vile Sir Hargrave, as the ſervant underſtood, was wounded. Sir Charles, it ſeems, was alſo hurt. Thank God it was ſo ſlightly, as not to hinder him from purſuing his journey to town after the glorious act.

I would have given the honeſt man a handſome gratuity: But he ſo earneſtly beſought me to excuſe him, declaring that he was under an obligation to the moſt generous of maſters to decline all gifts, that I was obliged to withdraw my hand.

I will ſpeed this away by Richard Fennell. I will ſoon ſend you farther particulars by the poſt: Not unhappy ones, I hope.

Excuſe, mean time, all that is amiſs in a Letter the greateſt part of which was written in ſuch dreadful uncertainty, and believe, that I will be

Ever Yours,

ARCHIBALD REEVES.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. REEVES, *To* GEORGE SELBY, *Eſq.*

Dear Sir, *Sat. Feb.* 18.

I AM juſt returned from viſiting my beloved Couſin. You will be glad of every minute particular, as I can give it to you, relating to this ſhocking affair; and to her protector and his Siſter. There are not ſuch another Brother and Siſter in England.

I got to the hoſpitable manſion by nine this morning. I enquired after Miſs Byron's health; and, on giving in my name, was ſhewn into a handſome parlour, elegantly furniſhed.

Immediately came down to me a very agreeable young Lady; Miſs Grandiſon. I gave her a thouſand thanks for the honour of her Letter, and the joyful information it had given me of the ſafety of one ſo deſervedly dear to us.

She *muſt* be an excellent young Lady, anſwered ſhe. I have juſt left her—You muſt not ſee her yet—

Ah, madam, ſaid I, and looked ſurpriſed and grieved, I believe—

Don't affright yourſelf, Sir. Miſs Byron will do very well: But ſhe muſt be kept quiet. She has had a happy deliverance—She—

O madam, interrupted I, your generous, your noble Brother—

Is the beſt of men, Mr. Reeves: His delight is in doing good.—And, as to this adventure, it has made him, I am ſure, a very happy man.

But is my Couſin, madam, ſo ill, that I cannot be allowed to ſee her for one moment?

She is but juſt come out of a fit. She fell into it in the relation ſhe would have made of her ſtory, on mentioning the villain's name by whom ſhe has ſuffered. She could give only broken and imperfect accounts

accounts of herſelf all day yeſterday, or you had heard from me ſooner. When you ſee her, you muſt be very cautious of what you ſay to her. We have a ſkilful phyſician, by whoſe advice we proceed.

God for ever bleſs you, madam!

He has not long left her. He adviſes quiet. She has had a very bad night. Could ſhe compoſe herſelf, could ſhe get a little natural reſt, the cure is performed. Have you breakfaſted, Sir?

Breakfaſted, madam! My impatience to ſee my Couſin allowed me not to think of breakfaſt.

You muſt breakfaſt with me, Sir. And when that is over, if ſhe is tolerable, we will acquaint her with your arrival, and go up together. I read your impatience, Sir: We will make but a very ſhort breakfaſting. I was juſt *going* to breakfaſt.

She rang. It was brought in.

I longed, I ſaid, as we ſat at tea, to be acquainted with the particulars of the happy deliverance.

We avoid aſking any queſtions that may affect her. I know very little of the particulars myſelf. My Brother was in haſte to get to town. The ſervants that were with him at the time, hardly diſmounted: He doubted not but the Lady (to whom he referred me for the gratifying my curioſity) would be able to tell me every thing. But ſhe fell into fits, and, as I told you, was ſo ill, on the recollection of what ſhe had ſuffered—

Good God! ſaid I, what *muſt* the dear creature have ſuffered!

—That we thought fit to reſtrain our curioſity, and ſo muſt you, till we ſee Sir Charles. I expect him before noon.

I am told, madam, that there was a ſkirmiſh. I hope Sir Charles—

I hope ſo too, Mr. Reeves, interrupted ſhe. I long to ſee my Brother as much as you can do to ſee your Couſin—But on my apprehenſions, he aſſured me upon

upon his honour, that he was but very ſlightly hurt. Sir Charles is no qualifier, Sir, when he ſtakes his honour, be the occaſion either light or ſerious.

I ſaid, I doubted not but ſhe was very much ſurpriſed at a Lady's being brought in by Sir Charles, and in a dreſs ſo fantaſtic.

I was Sir. I had not left my chamber: But haſtened down at the firſt word, to receive and welcome the ſtranger. My maid, out of breath, burſt into my room—Sir Charles, madam, beſeeches you this moment to come down. He has ſaved a Lady from robbers (that was her report) a very fine Lady! and is come back with her. He begs that you will come down this inſtant.

I was too much ſurpriſed at my Brother's unexpected return, and too much affected with the Lady's viſible grief and terror, to attend to her dreſs, when I firſt went down. She was ſitting, dreadfully trembling, and Sir Charles next her, in a very tender manner, aſſuring her of his and of his Siſter's kindeſt protection. I ſaluted her, continued the Lady: Welcome, welcome, thrice welcome to this houſe, and to me—

She threw herſelf on one knee to me. Diſtreſs had too much humbled her. Sir Charles and I raiſed her to her ſeat. You ſee before you, madam, ſaid ſhe, a ſtrange creature, and looked at her dreſs: But I hope you will believe I am an innocent one. This vile appearance was not my choice. Fie upon me! I muſt be thus dreſſed out for a Maſquerade: Hated diverſion! I never had a notion of it. Think not hardly, Sir, turning to Sir Charles, her hands claſped and held up, of her whom you have ſo generouſly delivered. Think not hardly of me, madam, turning to me: I am not a bad creature. That vile, vile man!—She could ſay no more.

Charlotte, ſaid my Brother, you will make it your firſt care to raiſe the ſpirits of this injured beauty: Your next, to take her directions, and inform her friends

friends of her ſafety. Such an admirable young Lady as this, cannot be miſſed an hour, without exciting the fears of all her friends for her. I repeat, madam, that you are in honourable hands. My ſiſter will have pleaſure in obliging you.

She wiſhed to be conveyed to town; but looking at her dreſs, I offered her cloaths of mine; and my Brother ſaid, if ſhe were very earneſt, and thought herſelf able to go, he would take horſe, and leave the chariot, and he was ſure that I would attend her thither.

But before ſhe could declare her acceptance of this offer, as ſhe ſeemed joyfully ready to do, her ſpirits failed her, and ſhe ſunk down at my feet.

Sir Charles juſt ſtaid to ſee her come to herſelf; and then—Siſter, ſaid he, the Lady cannot be removed. Let Dr. Holmes be ſent for inſtantly. I know you will give her your beſt attendance I will be with you before noon to-morrow. The Lady is too low, and too weak, to be troubled with queſtions now. Johnſon will be back from Windſor. Let him take her commands to any of her friends. Adieu, dear madam—[Your Couſin, Sir, ſeemed likely to faint again] Support yourſelf. Repeating, You are in ſafe and honourable hands; bowing to her, as ſhe bowed in return, but ſpoke not—Adieu, Charlotte: And away went the beſt of Brothers.

And God Almighty bleſs him, ſaid I, where-ever he goes!

Miſs Grandiſon then told me, that the houſe I was in belonged to the Earl of L. who had lately married her eldeſt Siſter: About three months ago, they ſet out, ſhe ſaid, to pay a viſit to my Lord's eſtate and relations in Scotland, for the firſt time, and to ſettle ſome affairs there: They were expected back in a week or fortnight: She came down but laſt Tueſday, and *that* in order to give directions for every-thing to be prepared for their reception. It was happy for

your

your Couſin, ſaid ſhe, that I obtained the favour of my Brother's company; and that he was obliged to be in town this morning. He intended to come back to carry me to town this evening. We are a family of love, Mr. Reeves. We are true Brothers and Siſters—But why do I trouble you with theſe things now? We ſhall be better acquainted. I am charmed with Miſs Byron.

She was ſo good as to hurry the breakfaſt; and when it was over, conducted me up ſtairs. She bid me ſtay at the door, and ſtept gently to the bed-ſide, and opening the curtain, I heard the voice of our Couſin.

Dear madam, what trouble do I give! were her words.

Still talk of trouble, Miſs Byron? anſwered Miſs Grandiſon, with an amiable familiarity; you will not forbear—Will you promiſe me not to be ſurpriſed at the arrival of your Couſin Reeves?

I do promiſe—I ſhall rejoice to ſee him.

Miſs Grandiſon called to me. I approached and catching my Couſin's held-out hand. Thank God, thank God, beſt beloved of a hundred hearts! ſaid I, that once more I behold you! that once more I ſee you in ſafe and honourable hands!—I will not tell you what we have all ſuffered.

No don't, ſaid ſhe—You need not—But, O my Couſin! I have fallen into the company of angels.

Forbear, gently patting her hand, forbear theſe high flights, ſaid the kind Lady, or I ſhall beat my charming patient. I ſhall not think you in a way to be quite well, till you *deſcend*.

She whiſpered me, that the doctor had expreſſed fears for her head, if ſhe were not kept quiet. Then raiſing her voice, Your Couſin's gratitude, Mr. Reeves, is exceſſive. You muſt allow me, ſmiling, to beat her. When ſhe is well, ſhe ſhall talk of angels, and of what ſhe pleaſes.

But,

But, my dear Mr. Selby, we who know how her heart overflows with ſentiments of gratitude, on every common obligation, and even on but *intentional* ones, can eaſily account for the high ſenſe ſhe muſt have of thoſe ſhe lies under for ſuch a deliverance by the Brother, and of ſuch kind treatment from the Siſter, both abſolute ſtrangers, till her diſtreſſes threw her into their protection

I will only aſk my dear Miſs Byron *one* queſtion, ſaid I (forgetting the caution given me below by Miſs Grandiſon), Whether this villain, by his violence—[meant marriage, I was going to ſay] But interrupting me, You ſhall not, Mr. Reeves, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon, ſmiling, aſk half a queſtion, that may revive diſagreeable remembrances. Is ſhe not alive, and here, and in a way to be well? Have patience till ſhe is able to tell you all.

My Couſin was going to ſpeak: My dear, ſaid the Lady, you ſhall not anſwer Mr. Reeves's queſtion, if it be a queſtion that will induce you to look backward. At preſent you muſt look only forward. And are you not in my care, and in Sir Charles Grandiſon's protection?

I have done, madam, ſaid I, bowing—The deſire of taking vengeance—

Huſh, Mr. Reeves!—Surely!—Smiling, and holding her finger to her lip.

It is a patient's duty, ſaid my Couſin, to ſubmit to the preſcriptions of her kind phyſician: But were I ever to forgive the author of my diſtreſſes, it muſt be for his being the occaſion of bringing me into the knowlege of ſuch a Lady: And yet to lie under the weight of obligations that I never can return—Here ſhe ſtopt.

I took this as a happy indication that the leaſt violence was not offered: If it had, ſhe would not have mentioned forgiving the author of her diſtreſs.

As to what you ſay of obligation, Miſs Byron, returned

returned Miſs Grandiſon, let *your* heart anſwer for *mine*, had you and I changed ſituations. And if, on ſuch a ſuppoſition, you can think, that your humanity would have been ſo extraordinary a matter, then ſhall you be at liberty, when you are recovered, to ſay a thouſand fine things: Till when, pray be ſilent on this ſubject.

Then turning to me, See how much afraid your Couſin Byron is of lying under obligation. I am afraid ſhe has a proud heart: Has ſhe not a *very* proud heart, Mr. Reeves?

She has a very *grateful* one, madam, replied I.

She turned to my Couſin: Will you, Miſs Byron, be eaſy under the obligations you talk of, or will you not?

I ſubmit to your ſuperiority, madam, in every thing, replied my Couſin; bowing her head.

She then aſked me, If I had let her friends in the country know of this ſhocking affair?

I had ſuſpected Mr. Greville, I ſaid, and had written in confidence to her Uncle Selby—

O my poor Grandmamma—O my good Aunt Selby, and my Lucy—I hope—

Miſs Grandiſon interpoſed, humorouſly, interrupting—I will have nothing ſaid that begins with *O*. Indeed, Miſs Byron, Mr. Reeves, I will not truſt you together—Cannot you have patience—

We both aſked her pardon. My Couſin deſired leave to riſe—But theſe odious cloaths, ſaid ſhe—

If you are well enough, child, replied Miſs Grandiſon, you ſhall riſe, and have no need to ſee thoſe odious cloaths, as you call them. I told them Mrs. Reeves had ſent her ſome of her cloaths. The portmanteau was ordered to be brought up.

Then Miſs Grandiſon, ſitting down on the bed by my Couſin, took her hand; and, feeling her pulſe, Are you ſure, my patient, that you ſhall not ſuffer if you are permitted to riſe? Will you be calm, ſerene, eaſy?

Will

Will you baniſh curioſity? Will you endeavour to avoid recollection?

I will do my endeavour, anſwered my Couſin.

Miſs Grandiſon then rung, and a maid-ſervant coming up, Jenny, ſaid ſhe, pray give your beſt aſſiſtance to my lovely patient. But be ſure don't let her hurry her ſpirits. I will lead Mr. Reeves into my dreſſing-room. And when you are dreſſed, my dear, we will either return to you here, or expect you to join us there, at your pleaſure.

And then ſhe obligingly conducted me into her dreſſing room, and excuſed herſelf for refuſing to let us talk of intereſting ſubjects. I am rejoiced, ſaid ſhe, to find her more ſedate and compoſed than hitherto ſhe has been. Her head has been greatly in danger. Her talk, for ſome hours, when ſhe *did* talk, was ſo wild and incoherent, and ſhe was ſo full of terror, on every one's coming in her ſight, that I would not ſuffer any-body to attend her but myſelf.

I left her not, continued Miſs Grandiſon, till eleven; and the houſekeeper, and my maid, ſat up in her room all the reſt of the night.

I aroſe before my uſual time to attend her. I ſlept not well myſelf. I did nothing but dream of robbers, reſcues, and murders: Such an impreſſion had the diſtreſs of this young Lady made on my mind.

They made me a poor report, proceeded ſhe, of the night ſhe had paſſed. And, as I told you, ſhe fainted away this morning, a little before you came, on her endeavouring to give me ſome account of her affecting ſtory.

Let me tell you, Mr. Reeves, I am as curious as you can be, to know the whole of what has befallen her. But her heart is tender and delicate: Her ſpirits are low; and we muſt not pull down with one hand, what we build up with the other: My Brother alſo will expect a good account of my charge.

I bleſſed her for her goodneſs. And finding her deſirous

deſirous of knowing all that I could tell her, of our Couſin's character, family, and Lovers, I gave her a brief hiſtory, which extremely pleaſed her. Good God, ſaid ſhe, what a happineſs is it, that ſuch a Lady, in ſuch a diſtreſs, ſhould meet with a man as excellent, and as much admired, as herſelf! My Brother, Mr. Reeves, can never marry but he muſt break half a ſcore hearts. Forgive me, that I bring *him* in, whenever any good perſon, or thing, or action, is ſpoken of. Every-body, I believe, who is ſtrongly poſſeſſed of a ſubject, makes every-thing ſeen, heard, or read of, that bears the leaſt reſemblance, turn into and ſerve to illuſtrate that ſubject.

But here I will conclude this Letter, in order to ſend it by the poſt. Beſides, I have been ſo much fatigued in body and mind, and my wife has alſo been ſo much diſturbed in *her* mind, that I muſt give way to a call of reſt.

I will purſue the ſubject, the now agreeable ſubject, in the morning; and perhaps ſhall diſpatch what I ſhall farther write, as you muſt be impatient for it, by an eſpecial meſſenger.

Sir Rowland was here twice yeſterday, and once to-day. My wife cauſed him to be told, that Miſs Byron, by a ſudden call, has been obliged to go a little way out of town for two or three days.

He propoſes to ſet out for Caermarthen the beginning of next week. He hoped he ſhould not be denied taking his *corporal* leave of her.

If our Couſin has a good day to-morrow, and no return of her fits, ſhe propoſes to be in town on Monday. I am to wait on her, and Sir Charles and his Siſter, at breakfaſt on Monday morning, and to attend her home; where there will be joy indeed, on her arrival.

Pray receive for yourſelf, and make for me to your Lady, and all friends, my compliments of congratulation.

I have

I have not had either leiſure or inclination, to enquire after the villain, who has given all this diſturbance.

Saturday Night. *Ever, ever Yours,*
ARCHIBALD REEVES.

LETTER XXVII.

From Mr. REEVES, *To* GEORGE SELBY, *Eſq.*

In Continuation.

MISS Grandiſon went to my Couſin, to ſee how ſhe bore riſing, ſuppoſing her near dreſſed.

She ſoon returned to me. The moſt charming woman, I think, ſaid ſhe, I ever ſaw! But ſhe trembles ſo, that I have perſuaded her to lie down. I anſwered for you, that you would ſtay dinner.

I muſt beg excuſe, madam. I have an excellent wife. She loves Miſs Byron as her life: She will be impatient to know—

Well, well, well, ſay no more, Mr. Reeves: My Brother has redeemed one priſoner, and his Siſter has taken another: And glad you may be, that it is no worſe.

I bowed, and looked ſilly, I believe.

You *may* look, and beg and pray, Mr. Reeves. When you know me better, you'll find me a very whimſical creature: But you muſt ſtay to ſee Sir Charles. Would you go home to your wife with half your errand? She won't thank you for that, I can tell you, let her be as good a woman as the beſt. But, to comfort you, we give not into every modern faſhion. We dine earlier than moſt people of our condition. My Brother, tho' in the main, above ſingularity, will nevertheleſs, in things he thinks right, be governed by his own rules, which are the laws of reaſon and convenience. You are on horſeback; and, were I you, ſuch good news as I ſhould have to carry, conſidering what

what *might* have happened, would give me wings, and make me fly thro' the air with it.

I was about to ſpeak: Come, come, I will have no denial, interrupted ſhe; I ſhall have a double pleaſure, if you are preſent when Sir Charles comes, on hearing his account of what happened. You are a good man, and have a *reaſonable quantity* of *wonder* and *gratitude*, to heighten a common caſe into the *marvellous*. So ſit down, and be quiet.

I was equally delighted and ſurpriſed at her humorous raillery, but could not anſwer a ſingle word. If it be midnight before you will ſuffer me to depart, thought I, I will not make another objection.

While this amiable Lady was thus entertaining me, we heard the trampling of horſes—My Brother! ſaid ſhe, I hope!—He comes! pardon the fondneſs of a Siſter, who ſpeaks from ſenſible effects—A Father and a Brother in one!

Sir Charles entered the room. He addreſſed himſelf to me in a moſt polite manner. Mr. Reeves! ſaid he, as I underſtand from below—Then turning to his Siſter, Excuſe me, Charlotte. I heard this worthy gentleman was with you: And I was impatient to know how my fair gueſt—

Miſs Byron is in a good way, I hope, interrupted ſhe, but very weak and low-ſpirited. She aroſe and dreſs'd; but I have prevailed on her to lie down again.

Then turning to me, with a noble air, he both welcomed and congratulated me.

Sir Charles Grandiſon is indeed a fine figure. He is in the bloom of youth. I don't know that I have ever ſeen a handſomer or genteeler man. Well might his Siſter ſay, that if he married, he would break half a ſcore hearts. O this vile Pollexfen! thought I, at the moment; Could he draw upon, has he hurt, ſuch a man as this?

After pouring out my acknowlegements, in the name of

of ſeveral families, as well as in my own, I could not but enquire into the nature of the hurt he had received.

A very trifle!—My coat only was hurt, Mr. Reeves. The ſkin of my left ſhoulder raked a little, putting his hand upon it.

Thank God, ſaid I: Thank God, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon—But ſo *near!*—O the villain! what might it have been!—

Sir Hargrave, pent up in a chariot, had great diſadvantage. My reflections on the event of yeſterday, yield me the more pleaſure, as I have, on enquiry, underſtood that he will do well again, if he will be ruled. I would not, on any account, have had his inſtant death to anſwer for. But no more of this juſt now. Give me the particulars of the young Lady's ſtate of health. I left her in a very bad way.—You had advice?

Miſs Grandiſon gave her Brother an account of all that had been done; and of every-thing that had paſſed ſince he went away; as alſo of the character and excellencies of the Lady whom he had reſcued.

I confirmed what ſhe ſaid in my Couſin's favour; and he very gratefully thanked his Siſter for her care, as a man would do for one the neareſt and deareſt to him.

We then beſought him to give an account of the glorious action, which had reſtored to all that knew her, the darling of our hearts.

I will relate all he ſaid, in the firſt perſon, as nearly in his own words as poſſible, and will try to hit the coolneſs with which he told the agreeable ſtory.

'You know, Siſter, ſaid he, the call I had to town. 'It was happy, that I yielded to your importunity to 'attend you hither.

'About two miles on this ſide Hounſlow, I ſaw a 'chariot-and-ſix driving at a great rate. I alſo had 'ordered Jerry to drive pretty faſt.

'The coachman ſeemed inclined to diſpute the

'way with mine. This occaſioned a few moments 'ſtop to both. I ordered my coachman to break the 'way. I don't love to ſtand upon trifles. My horſes 'were freſh: I had not come far.

'The curtain of the chariot we met, was pulled 'down. I ſaw not who was in it; but on turning 'out of the way, I knew, by the arms, it was Sir Har-'grave Pollexfen's.

'There was in it a gentleman, who immediately 'pulled up the canvas.

'I ſaw, however, before he drew it up, another 'perſon, wrapt up in a man's ſcarlet cloak.

'For God's ſake! help, help! cried out the perſon: 'For God's ſake help!

'I ordered the coachman to ſtop.

'Drive on, ſaid the gentleman; curſing his coach-'man: drive on, when I bid you.

'Help! again cried ſhe, but with a voice as if her 'mouth was half ſtopt.

'I called to my ſervant on horſeback to ſtop the 'poſtillion of the other chariot: And I bid Sir Har-'grave's coachman proceed at his peril.

'Sir Hargrave called out, on the contrary ſide of the 'chariot (his canvas being ſtill up on that next me) 'with vehement execrations, to drive on.

'I alighted, and went round to the other ſide of the 'chariot.

'Again the Lady endeavoured to cry out. I ſaw 'Sir Hargrave ſtruggle to pull over her mouth a hand-'kerchief, which was tied round her head. He ſwore 'outrageouſly.

'The moment ſhe beheld me, ſhe ſpread out both 'her hands—For God's ſake—

'Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, ſaid I, by the arms.—You 'are engaged, I doubt, in a very bad affair.

'I *am* Sir Hargrave Pollexfen; and am carrying a 'fugitive wife—Your *own* wife, Sir Hargrave!

'Yes, by G—, ſaid he; and ſhe was going to

'elope from me at a damned Maſquerade—See! draw-
'ing aſide the cloak, detected in the very dreſs!

'O no! no! no! ſaid the Lady—

'Proceed, coachman, ſaid he, and curſed and
'ſwore—

'Let me aſk the Lady a queſtion, Sir Hargrave.

'You are impertinent, Sir. Who the devil are
'you?

'Are you, madam, Lady Pollexfen? ſaid I.

'O no! no! no!—was all ſhe could ſay—

'Two of my ſervants came about me; a third
'held the head of the horſe on which the poſtillion ſat.
'Three of Sir Hargrave's approached on their horſes;
'but ſeemed as if afraid to come too near, and par-
'leyed together.

'Have an eye to thoſe fellows, ſaid I. Some baſe
'work is on foot. You'll preſently be aided by paſſen-
'gers. Sirrah, ſaid I to the coachman (for he laſhed
'the horſes on) proceed at your peril.

'Sir Hargrave then, with violent curſes and threat-
'enings, ordered him to drive over every one that
'oppoſed him.

'Coachman proceed at your peril, ſaid I. Madam,
'will you—

'O Sir, Sir, Sir, relieve, help me for God's ſake!
'I am in a villain's hands! Trick'd, vilely trick'd in-
'to a villain's hands. Help, help, for God's ſake!

'Do you, ſaid I, to Frederick, cut the traces, if you
'cannot otherwiſe ſtop this chariot. Bid Jerry cut the
'reins, and then ſeize as many of thoſe fellows as you
'can. Leave Sir Hargrave to me.

'The Lady continued ſcreaming and crying out for
'help.

'Sir Hargrave drew his ſword which he had held
'between his knees in the ſcabbard; and then called
'upon his ſervants to fire at all that oppoſed his pro-
'greſs.

'My ſervants, Sir Hargrave, have fire-arms as well

'as yours. They will not diſpute my orders. Don't
'provoke me to give the word.

'Then addreſſing the Lady, Will you, madam, put
'yourſelf into my protection?

'O yes, yes, yes, with my whole heart—Dear good
'Sir, protect me!

I opened the chariot door. Sir Hargrave made a
'paſs at me. Take *that*, and be damn'd to you, for
'your inſolence, ſcoundrel! ſaid he.

'I was aware of this thruſt, and put it by; but his
'ſword a little raked my ſhoulder.

'My ſword was in my hand; but undrawn.

'The chariot-door remaining open (I was not ſo
'ceremonious, as to let down the foot-ſtep to take the
'gentleman out) I ſeized him by the collar before he
'could recover himſelf from the paſs he had made at
'me; and with a jerk, and a kind of twiſt, laid him
'under the hind-wheel of his chariot.

'I wrenched his ſword from him, and ſnapped it,
'and flung the two pieces over my head.

'His coachman cried out for his maſter. Mine
'threatened *his* if he ſtirred. The poſtillion was a boy.
'My ſervant had made him diſmount, before he joined
'the other two, whom I had ordered aloud to en-
'deavour to ſeize (but my view was only to terrify)
'wretches who, knowing the badneſs of their cauſe,
'were before terrified.

'Sir Hargrave's mouth and face were very bloody.
'I believe I might hurt him with the pommel of my
'ſword.

'One of his legs, in his ſprawling, had got between
'the ſpokes of his chariot-wheel. I thought that was
'a fortunate circumſtance for preventing further miſ-
'chief; and charged his coachman not to ſtir with the
'chariot, for his maſter's ſake.

'He cried out, curſed, and ſwore. I believe he
'was bruiſed with the fall. The jerk was violent.
'So little able to ſupport an offence, Sir Hargrave,

'upon his own principles, ſhould not have been ſo 'ready to give it.

'I had not drawn my ſword: I hope I never ſhall 'be provoked to do it in a private quarrel. I ſhould 'not however, have ſcrupled to draw it, on ſuch an 'occaſion as this, had there been an abſolute neceſſity 'for it.

'The Lady, tho' greatly terrified, had diſengaged 'herſelf from the man's cloak. I had not leiſure to 'conſider her dreſs; but I was ſtruck with her figure, 'and more with her terror.

'I offered my hand. I thought not now of the 'foot-ſtep, any more than I did before: She not of 'any-thing, as it ſeemed, but her deliverance.

'Have you not read, Mr. Reeves (Pliny, I think, 'gives the relation), of a frighted bird, that, purſued 'by a hawk, flew for protection into the boſom of a 'man paſſing by?

'In like manner your lovely Couſin, the moment I 'returned to the chariot-door, inſtead of accepting of 'my offered hand, threw herſelf into my arms.—O 'ſave me! ſave me!—She was ready to faint. She 'could not, I believe, have ſtood.

'I carried her round Sir Hargrave's horſes, and 'ſeated her in my chariot.—Be aſſured, madam, ſaid 'I, that you are in honourable hands. I will convey 'you to my Siſter, who is a young Lady of honour 'and virtue.

'She looked out at one window, then at the other, 'in viſible terror, as if fearing ſtill Sir Hargrave. Fear 'nothing, ſaid I: I will attend you in a moment. I 'ſhut the chariot-door.

'I then went backward a few paces (keeping how-'ever, the Lady in my eye) to ſee what had become 'of my ſervants.

'It ſeems, that at their firſt coming up pretty near 'with Sir Hargrave's horſemen, they preſented their 'piſtols.

'What ſhall we do, Wilkins, or Wilſon, or ſome 'ſuch name, ſaid one of Sir Hargrave's men to an-'other, all three of them on their defence? Fly for 'it, anſwered the fellow. We may ſwing for this. 'I ſee our maſter down. There may be murder.

'Their conſciences put them to flight.

'My ſervants purſued them a little way; but were 'returning to ſupport their maſter, juſt as I had put the 'Lady into my chariot.

'I ſaw Sir Hargrave at a diſtance, on his legs, ſup-'ported by his coachman. He limped; leaned his 'whole weight upon his ſervant: and ſeemed to be 'in agonies.

'I bid one of my ſervants tell him who I was.

'He curſed me, and threatened vengeance. He 'curſed my ſervant; and ſtill more outrageouſly his 'own ſcoundrels, as he called them.

'I then ſtept back to my chariot.

'Miſs Byron had, thro' terror, ſunk down at the 'bottom of it; where ſhe lay panting, and could only 'ſay, on my approach, Save me! Save me!

'I re-aſſured her. I lifted her on the ſeat, and 'brought her to my Siſter; and what followed, I ſup-'poſe, Charlotte, bowing to her, you have told Mr. 'Reeves.'

We were both about to break out in grateful ap-plauſes; but Sir Charles, as if deſigning to hinder us, proceeded:

'You ſee, Mr. Reeves, what an eaſy conqueſt this 'was. You ſee what a ſmall degree of merit falls to 'my ſhare. The violator's conſcience was againſt 'him. The conſciences of his fellows were on my 'ſide. My own ſervants are honeſt worthy men. 'They love their maſter. In a good cauſe I would ſet 'any three of them againſt ſix who were engaged 'in a bad one. Vice is the greateſt coward in the 'world, when it knows it will be reſolutely oppoſed.

'And what have good men, engaged in a right cauſe, 'to fear?'

What an admirable man is Sir Charles Grandiſon!—Thus thinking! Thus acting!

I explained to Sir Charles who this Wilſon was, whom the others conſulted, and were directed by; and what an implement in this black tranſaction.

To what other man's protection in the world, Mr. Selby, could our Miſs Byron have been obliged, and ſo little miſchief followed?

Sir Hargrave, it ſeems, returned back to town. What a recreant figure, my dear Mr. Selby, muſt he make, even to himſelf!—A villain!

Sir Charles ſays, that the turnpike-men at Smallbury Green told his ſervants on their attending him to town after the happy reſcue, a formidable ſtory of a robbery committed a little beyond Hounſlow by half a dozen villains on horſeback, upon a gentleman in a chariot-and-ſix; which had paſſed thro' that turnpike but half an hour before he was attacked; and that the gentleman about an hour and half before Sir Charles went thro', returned to town, wounded, for advice; and they heard him groan as he paſſed through the turnpike.

I ſhould add one circumſtance, ſaid Sir Charles: Do you know, Charlotte, that you have a rake for your Brother?—A man on horſeback, it ſeems, came to the turnpike gate, whilſt the turnpike-men were telling my ſervants this ſtory. Nothing in the world, ſaid he, but two young rakes in their chariots-and-ſix, one robbing the other of a Lady. I, and two other paſſengers, added the man, ſtood aloof to ſee the iſſue of the affair. We expected miſchief; and ſome there was. One of the by-ſtanders was the better for the fray; for he took up a ſilver-hilted ſword, broken in two pieces, and rode off with it.

Sir Hargrave, ſaid Sir Charles, ſmiling, might well give out that he was robbed; to loſe ſuch a prize as Miſs Byron, and his ſword beſides.

I aſked Sir Charles, if it were not adviſeable to take meaſures with the villain?

He thought it beſt, he ſaid, to take as little notice of the affair as poſſible, unleſs the aggreſſor ſtirred in it. Maſquerades, added he, are not creditable places for young Ladies to be known to be *inſulted* at them. They are diverſions that fall not in with the genius of the Engliſh commonalty. Scandal will have ſomething to ſay from that circumſtance, however cauſeleſs. But Miſs Byron's ſtory, told by herſelf, will enable you to reſolve upon your future meaſures.

So, Sir Charles ſeems not to be a friend to Maſquerades.

I think, were I to live a hundred years, I never would go to another. Had it not been for Lady Betty—She has, indeed, too gay a turn for a woman of forty, and a mother of children. Miſs Byron, I dare ſay, will be afraid of giving the lead to her for the future. But, excepting my wife and ſelf, nobody in town has ſuffered more than Lady Betty on this occaſion. Indeed ſhe is, I muſt ſay, an obliging, well-meaning woman: And ſhe alſo declares (ſo much has ſhe been affected with Miſs Byron's danger, of which ſhe takes herſelf to be the innocent cauſe) that ſhe will never again go to a Maſquerade.

I long to have Miſs Byron's account of this horrid affair. —God grant, that it may not be ſuch a one, as will lay us under a neceſſity—But as our Couſin has a great notion of female delicacy—I know not what I would ſay—We muſt have patience a little while longer.

Miſs Grandiſon's eyes ſhone with pleaſure all the time her brother was giving his relation.

I can only ſay, Brother, ſaid ſhe, when he had done, that you have reſcued an angel of a woman; and you have made me as happy by it, as yourſelf.

I have a generous Siſter, Mr. Reeves, ſaid Sir Charles.

Till I knew my Brother, Mr. Reeves, as I now

know him, I was an inconſiderate, unreflecting girl. Good and evil, which immediately affected not myſelf, were almoſt alike indifferent to me. But he has awakened in me a capacity to enjoy the true pleaſure that ariſes from a benevolent action.

Depreciate not, my Charlotte, your own worth. Abſence, Mr Reeves, endears. I have been long abroad: Not much above a year returned! But when you know us better, you will find I have a partial Siſter.

Mr. Reeves will not then think me ſo. But I will go and ſee how my fair patient does.

She went accordingly to my Couſin.

O Sir Charles, ſaid I, what an admirable woman is Miſs Grandiſon!

My Siſter Charlotte, Mr. Reeves, is, indeed, an excellent woman. I think myſelf happy in her: But I tell her ſometimes, that I have ſtill a *more* excellent Siſter: And it is no ſmall inſtance of Charlotte's greatneſs of mind, that ſhe herſelf will allow me to ſay ſo.

Juſt then came in the Ladies: The two charming creatures entered together, Miſs Grandiſon ſupporting my trembling Couſin: But ſhe had firſt acquainted her, that ſhe would find Sir Charles in *her* dreſſing-room.

She looked indeed lovely, tho' wan, at her firſt entrance; but a fine glow overſpread her cheeks, at the ſight of her deliverer.

Sir Charles approached her, with an air of calmneſs and ſerenity, for fear of giving her emotion. She caſt her eyes upon him, with a look of the moſt reſpectful gratitude.

I will not oppreſs my fair gueſt with many words: But permit me to congratulate you, as I hope I may, on your recovered ſpirits—Allow me, madam—

And he took her almoſt-motionleſs hand, and conducted her to an eaſy chair that had been ſet for her. She ſat down, and would have ſaid ſomething; but only

only bowed to Sir Charles, to Miſs Grandiſon, and me; and reclined her head againſt the cheek of the chair.

Miſs Grandiſon held her ſalts to her.

She took them into her own hands, and ſmelling to them, raiſed her head a little: Forgive me, madam. Pardon me, Sir! —O my Couſin, to me—How can I —So oppreſſed with obligations! —Such goodneſs!— No words!—My gratitude!—My full heart!—

And then ſhe again reclined her head, as giving up hopeleſsly the effort ſhe made to expreſs her gratitude.

You muſt not, madam, ſaid Sir Charles, ſitting down by her, over-rate a common benefit.—Dear Miſs Byron (Permit me to addreſs myſelf to you, as of long acquaintance) by what Mr. Reeves has told my Siſter, and both have told me, I muſt think yeſterday one of the happieſt days of my life. I am ſorry that our acquaintance has begun ſo much at your coſt: But you muſt let us turn this evil appearance into real good. I have two Siſters: The world produces not more worthy women. Let me henceforth boaſt that I have three: And ſhall I not then have reaſon to rejoice in the event that has made ſo lovely an addition to my family?

Then taking her paſſive hand with the tenderneſs of a truly-affectionate Brother, conſoling a Siſter in calamity, and taking his Siſter's, and joining both; Shall I not, madam, preſent my Charlotte to a Siſter? And will you not permit me to claim as a Brother under that relation? Miſs Byron's chriſtian name, Mr. Reeves?

Harriet, Sir.

My Siſter Harriet, receive and acknowledge your Charlotte. My Charlotte—

Miſs Grandiſon aroſe, and ſaluted my Couſin; who looked at Sir Charles with reverence, as well as gratitude; at Miſs Grandiſon with delight; and at me with eyes liſted up: And, after a little ſtruggle for

ſpeech; How ſhall I bear this goodneſs! ſaid ſhe—This, indeed, is bringing good out of evil! Did I not ſay, Couſin, that I was fallen into the company of angels?

I was afraid ſhe would have fainted.

We muſt endeavour, Mr. Reeves, ſaid Sir Charles to me, to leſſen the ſenſe *our* Miſs Byron has of her paſt danger, in order to bring down to reaſonable limits, the notion ſhe has of her obligation for a common relief.

Miſs Grandiſon ordered a few drops on ſugar—You muſt be orderly, my Siſter Harriet, ſaid ſhe. Am I not your elder Siſter?. *My* elder Siſter makes me do what ſhe pleaſes.

Oh! madam! ſaid my Couſin—

Call me not *Madam*; call me *your Charlotte*. My Brother has given me and himſelf a ſiſter—Will you not own me?

How can a heart bowed down by obligation, and goodneſs never to be returned, riſe to that lovely familiarity, by which the obligers ſo generouſly diſtinguiſh themſelves? My lips and my heart, I will be ſo bold as to ſay, ever went together: But how—And yet ſo ſweetly invited, My—My—My Charlotte (withdrawing her hand from Sir Charles, and claſping both her arms round Miſs Grandiſon's neck, the two worthieſt boſoms of the Sex joining as one) take your Harriet, perſon and mind—May I be found worthy, on proof, of all this goodneſs!

* *

Lady Betty has juſt left us. I read to her what I have written ſince my viſit to Colnebrook. She ſhall not, ſhe ſays, recover her eyes for a week to come.

The women, Mr. Selby, are ever looking forward on certain occaſions. Lady Betty and my wife extended their wiſhes ſo far, as that they might be able to call Miſs Grandiſon and our Miſs Byron Siſters; but by a claim that ſhould exclude Sir Charles as a Brother to one of them. Should

Should Sir Charles—But no more on this ſubject—Yet one word more: When the Ladies had mentioned it, I could not help thinking that this graceful and truly fine gentleman ſeems to be the only man, whom our Couſin has yet ſeen, that would meet with no great difficulty from her on ſuch an application.

But Sir Charles has a great eſtate, and ſtill greater expectations from my Lord W. His Siſter ſays, he would break half a ſcore hearts, were he to marry—So for that matter would our Miſs Byron. But once more—Not another word, however, on this ſubject.

I ſtaid to dine with this amiable Brother and Siſter. My Couſin exerted herſelf to go down, and ſat at table for one half-hour: But changing countenance, once or twice, as ſhe ſat, Miſs Grandiſon would attend her up, and make her lie down. I took leave of her, at her quitting the table.

On Monday I hope to ſee her once more among us.

If our dear Miſs Byron cannot write, you will perhaps have one Letter more, my dear Mr. Selby, from

Your ever affectionate,

ARCHIBALD REEVES.

My ſervant is this moment returned with your Letter. Indeed, my dear Mr. Selby, there are two or three paſſages in it, that would have cut me to the heart (*a*), had not the dear creature been ſo happily reſtored to our hopes.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. REEVES. *In Continuation.*

Monday Night, Feb. 20.

I WILL write one more Letter, my dear Mr. Selby, and then I will give up my pen to our beloved Couſin.

(*a*) See Letter xxiv. p. 165.

I got to Colnebrook by nine this morning, I had the pleaſure to find our Miſs Byron recovered beyond my hopes. She had a very good night on Saturday; and all Sunday, ſhe ſaid, was a cordial day to her from morning till night; and her night was quiet and happy.

Miſs Grandiſon ſtaid at home yeſterday to keep my Couſin company. Sir Charles paſſed the greateſt part of the day in the Library. The two Ladies were hardly ever ſeparated. My Couſin expreſſes herſelf in raptures, whenever ſhe ſpeaks of this Brother and Siſter. Miſs Grandiſon, ſhe ſays (and indeed every one muſt ſee it) is one of the frankeſt and moſt communicative of women. Sir Charles appears to be one of the moſt unreſerved of men, as well as one of the moſt polite. He makes not his gueſts uneaſy with his civilities: But you ſee freedom and eaſe in his whole deportment; and the ſtranger cannot doubt but Sir Charles will be equally pleaſed with freedom and eaſe, in return. I had an encouraging proof of the juſtneſs of this obſervation this morning from him, as we ſat at breakfaſt. I had expreſſed myſelf, occaſionally, in ſuch a manner, as ſhewed more reſpect than freedom: My dear Mr. Reeves, ſaid he, kindred minds will be intimate at firſt ſight. Receive me early into the liſt of your friends; I have already numbered you among mine. I ſhould think amiſs of myſelf, if ſo good a man as I am aſſured Mr. Reeves is, ſhould, by his diſtance, ſhew a diffidence of me, that would not permit his mind to mingle with mine.

Miſs Grandiſon, my Couſin ſays, put her on relating to her, her whole hiſtory; and the hiſtories of the ſeveral perſons and families to whom ſhe is related.

Miſs Byron concluding, as well as I, that Sir Charles would rather take his place in the coach, than go on horſeback to town; and being ſo happily recovered, as not to give us apprehenſion about her bearing tolerably the little journey; I kept my horſe in our return,

and

and Sir Charles went in the coach. This motion coming from Miſs Byron, I raillied her upon it when I got her home: But ſhe won't forgive me, if ſhe knows that I told you whoſe the motion was. And yet the dear creature's eyes ſparkled with pleaſure when ſhe had carried her point.

I was at home near half an hour before the coach arrived; and was a welcome gueſt.

My dear Mrs. Reeves told me, ſhe had expected our arrival before dinner, and hoped Sir Charles and his Siſter would dine with us. I hoped ſo too, I told her.

I found there Lady Betty and Miſs Clements, a favourite of us all, both impatiently waiting to ſee my Couſin.

Don't be jealous, Mr. Reeves, ſaid my wife, if after what I have heard of Sir Charles Grandiſon, and what he has done for us, I run to him with open arms.

I give you leave, my dear, to love him, replied I; and to expreſs your Love in what manner you pleaſe.

I have no doubt, ſaid Lady Betty, that I ſhall break my heart, if Sir Charles takes not very particular notice of me.

He ſhall have my prayers, as well as my praiſes, ſaid Miſs Clements.

She is acquainted with the whole ſhocking affair.

When the coach ſtopt, and the bell rung, the ſervants contended who ſhould firſt run to the door. I welcomed them at the coach. Sir Charles handed out Miſs Byron, I Miſs Grandiſon: Sally, ſaid my Couſin, to her raptured maid, take care of Mrs. Jenny.

Sir Charles was received, by Mrs. Reeves, as I expected. She was almoſt ſpeechleſs with joy. He ſaluted her: But I think, as I tell her, the firſt motion was hers. He was then obliged to go round; and my Couſin, I do aſſure you, looked as if ſhe would not wiſh to have been neglected.

As ſoon as the Ladies could ſpeak, they poured out their

their bleſſings and thanks to him, and to Miſs Grandiſon; whom, with a moſt engaging air, he preſented to each Lady; and ſhe, as engagingly, ſaluted her Siſter Harriet by that tender relation, and congratulated them, and Miſs Byron, and herſelf upon it; kindly beſpeaking a family relation for herſelf thro' her dear Miſs Byron, were her words.

When we were ſeated, my wife and Lady Betty wanted to enter into the particulars of the happy deliverance, in praiſe of the deliverer; but Sir Charles interrupting them, My dear Mrs. Reeves, ſaid he, you cannot be too careful of this jewel. Every thing may be truſted to her own diſcretion; but how can we well blame the man who would turn thief for ſo rich a treaſure? I do aſſure you, my Siſter Harriet (Do you know, Mrs. Reeves, that I have found my third Siſter? Was ſhe not ſtolen from us in her cradle?) that if Sir Hargrave will repent, I will forgive him for the ſake of the temptation.

Mrs. Reeves was pleaſed with this addreſs, and has talked of it ſince.

I never can forgive him, Sir, ſaid Miſs Byron, were it but—

That he has laid you under ſuch an obligation, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon, patting her hand with her fan, as ſhe ſat over againſt her: But huſh, child! You ſaid that before!—And then turning to Mrs. Reeves, Has not our new-found Siſter a very proud heart, Mrs. Reeves?

And, deareſt Miſs Grandiſon, replied my ſmiling, delighted Couſin, did you not aſk that queſtion before?

I did, child, I did; but not of Mrs. Reeves.—A compromiſe however—Do you talk no more of *obligation*, and I'll talk no more of *pride*.

Charlotte juſtly chides her Harriet, ſaid Sir Charles. What muſt the man have been that had declined his aid in a diſtreſs ſo alarming? Not one word more therefore upon this ſubject.

We

We were all diſappointed, that this amiable Brother and Siſter excuſed themſelves from dining with us. All I mean of our own family; for Lady Betty and Miſs Clements, not being able to ſtay, were glad *they* did not.

They took leave, amidſt a thouſand grateful bleſſings and acknowlegements; Miſs Grandiſon promiſing to ſee her Siſter Harriet very ſoon again; and kindly renewing her wiſhes of intimacy.

When they went away, There goes your heart, Miſs Byron, ſaid Mrs. Reeves.

True, anſwered Miſs Byron, if my heart have no place in it for any-thing but gratitude, as I believe it has not.

Miſs Grandiſon, added ſhe, is the moſt agreeable of women—

And Sir Charles, rejoined Mrs. Reeves, archly, is the moſt *diſ*-agreeable of men.

Forbear, Couſin, replied Miſs Byron, and bluſhed.

Well, well, ſaid Lady Betty, you need not, my dear, be aſhamed, if it be ſo.

Indeed you need not, joined in Miſs Clements: I never ſaw a finer man in my life. Such a Lover, if one *might* have him—

If, *if*—replied Miſs Byron—But till *if* is out of the queſtion, ſhould there not be ſuch a thing as diſcretion, Miſs Clements?

No doubt of it, returned that young Lady; and if it *be* to be ſhewn by any woman on earth, where there is ſuch a man as this in the queſtion, and in ſuch circumſtances, it muſt be by Miſs Byron.

Miſs Byron was not ſo thoroughly recovered, but that her ſpirits began to flag. We made her retire, and, at her requeſt, excuſed her coming down to dinner.

I told you I had accepted of the offer made by Lady Betty, when we were in dreadful uncertainty, that her ſteward ſhould make further enquiries about the

people

people at Paddington. Nothing worth mentioning has occurred from thoſe enquiries; except confirming, that the widow and her daughters are not people of bad characters. In all likelihood they thought they ſhould intitle themſelves to the thanks of all Miſs Byron's friends, when the marriage was completed with a man of Sir Hargrave's fortune.

The meſſenger that I ſent to enquire after that Bagenhall's character, has informed us, that it is a very profligate one; and that he is an intimate of Sir Hargrave: But no more is neceſſary now, God be praiſed, to be ſaid of him.

The vile wretch himſelf, I hear, keeps his room; and it is whiſpered, that he is more than half-crazed; inſomuch that his very attendants are afraid to go near him. We know not the nature of his hurt; but hurt he is, tho' in a fair way of recovery. He threatens, it ſeems, deſtruction to Sir Charles, the moment he is able to go abroad. God preſerve one of the worthieſt and beſt of men!

Sir Hargrave has turned off all the ſervants, we are told, that attended him on his ſhocking, but happily-diſappointed, enterprize.

Miſs Byron intends to write to her Lucy by to-morrow's poſt (if ſhe continue mending) an ample account of all that ſhe ſuffered from the date of her laſt Letter, to the hour of her happy deliverance. I am to give her minutes, to the beſt of my recollection, of what I have written to you; that ſo the account may be as complete as poſſible, and that ſhe may write no more than is conſiſtent with the ſeries, which ſhe is required to preſerve. She begins this evening, ſhe bids me tell you, that you may be as little a while in ſuſpenſe about her as poſſible: But if ſhe cannot finiſh by to-morrow night, ſhe will have an opportunity to diſpatch her Letter on Wedneſday by a ſervant of Mr. Greville's, whom he left in town with ſome commiſſions, and who promiſes to call for any-thing we may have to ſend to Selby-houſe. Sir.

Sir Rowland—But let my Couſin write to you upon that and other matters. She knows what to ſay on that ſubject better than I do.

Mean time I heartily congratulate every one of the dear family upon the return and ſafety of the darling of ſo many hearts; and remain, dear Mr. Selby,

Your moſt faithful and obedient Servant,

ARCHIBALD REEVES.

LETTER XXIX.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Monday, Feb. 20.

IS it again given me to write to you, my Lucy! and in you, to all my revered friends! To write with chearfulneſs! To call upon you all to rejoice with me!—God be praiſed!

What dangers have I eſcaped! How have my head and my heart been affected! I dare not, as yet, think of the anguiſh you all endured for me.

With what wretched levity did I conclude my laſt Letter! Giddy creature, that I was, vain and fooliſh!

But let me begin my ſad ſtory. Your impatience all this while muſt be too painful. Only let me premiſe, that gaily as I boaſted, when I wrote to you ſo conceitedly, as it might ſeem, of my dreſs, and of conqueſts, and I know not what nonſenſe, I took no pleaſure at the place, in the ſhoals of fools that ſwam after me. I deſpiſed myſelf and them. *Deſpiſed!* I was ſhocked at both.

Two Lucifers were among them; but the worſt, the very worſt Lucifer of all, appeared in a Harlequin dreſs. He hopped and ſkipt, and played the fool about me; and at laſt told me, He knew Miſs Byron; and that he was, as he called himſelf, the deſpiſed, the rejected, Sir Hargrave Pollexfen.

He

He behaved, however, with complaiſance; and I had no apprehenſion of what I was to ſuffer from his villany.

Mr. Reeves has told you, that he ſaw me into the chair, provided for me by my vile new ſervant. O my Lucy! One branch of my vanity is entirely lopt off. I muſt pretend to ſome ſort of ſkill in phyſiognomy! Never more will I, for this fellow's ſake, preſume to depend on my judgment of people's hearts framed from their countenances.

Mr. Reeves has told you every thing about the chair, and the chairmen. How can I deſcribe the miſgivings of my heart when I firſt began to ſuſpect treachery! But when I undrew the curtains, and found myſelf farther deluded by another falſe heart, whoſe help I implored, and in the midſt of fields, and ſoon after the lights put out, I pierced the night air with my ſcreams, till I could ſcream no more. I was taken out in fits; and when I came a little to my ſenſes, I found myſelf on a bed, three women about me; one at my head, holding a bottle to my noſe, my noſtrils ſore with hartſhorn, and a ſtrong ſmell of burnt feathers; but no man near me.

Where am I? Who are you, madam? And who are you? Where am I? Were the queſtions I firſt aſked.

The women were a Mother and two Daughters. The Mother anſwered, You are not in bad hands.

God grant you ſay truth! ſaid I.

No harm is intended you; only to make you one of the happieſt of women. We would not be concerned in a bad action.

I hope not: I hope not: Let me engage your pity, madam. You ſeem to be a Mother: Theſe young gentlewomen, I preſume, are your Daughters. Save me from ruin, I beſeech you, madam: Save me from ruin, as you would your Daughters.

Theſe young women *are* my Daughters. They are ſober

ſober and modeſt women. No ruin is intended you. One of the richeſt and nobleſt men in England is your admirer: He dies for you. He aſſures me, that he intends honourable marriage to you. You are not engaged, he ſays: And you muſt, and you ſhall, be his. You may ſave murder, madam, if you conſent. He reſolves to be the death of any Lover whom you encourage.

This muſt be the vile contrivance of Sir Hargrave Pollexſen, immediately cried I out: Is it not? Is it not? Tell me; I *beg* of you to tell me.

I aroſe, and ſat on the bed-ſide; and at that moment in came the vile, vile Sir Hargrave.

I ſcreamed out. He threw himſelf at my feet. I reclined my head on the boſom of the elderly perſon, and by hartſhorn and water they had much ado to keep me out of a fit. Had he not withdrawn; had he kept in my ſight; I ſhould certainly have fainted. But holding up my head, and ſeeing only the women, I revived: And began to pray, to beg, to offer rewards, if they would facilitate my eſcape, or procure my ſafety: But then came in again the hated man.

I beg of you, Miſs Byron, ſaid he, with an air of greater haughtineſs than before, to make yourſelf eaſy, and hear what I have to ſay. It is in your own choice, in your own power, to be what you pleaſe, and to make *me* what you pleaſe. Do not therefore needleſsly terrify yourſelf. You ſee I am a determined man. Ladies, you may withdraw—

Not and leave me here!—And as they went out, I puſhed by the Mother, and between the Daughters, and followed the foremoſt into the parlour; and then ſunk down on my knees, wrapping my arms about her: O ſave me! ſave me! ſaid I.

The vile wretch entered. I left her, and kneeled to him. I knew not what I did. I remember, I ſaid, wringing my hands, If you have mercy; If you have compaſſion; let me now, now, I beſeech you, Sir, this moment, experience your mercy. He

He gave them ſome motion, I ſuppoſe, to withdraw (for by that time the widow and the other daughter were in the parlour); and they all three retired.

I have beſought *you*, madam, and on my *knees* too, to ſhew *me* mercy; but none would you ſhew me, inexorable Miſs Byron! Kneel, if you will; in your turn kneel, ſupplicate, pray; you cannot be more in earneſt, than I was. Now are the tables turned.

Barbarous man! ſaid I, riſing from my knees. My ſpirit was raiſed; but it as inſtantly ſubſided. I beſeech you, Sir Hargrave, in a quite frantic way, wringing my hands, and coming near him, and then running to the window, and then to the door (without meaning to go out at either, had they been open; for whither could I go?) and then again to him: Be not, I beſeech you, Sir Hargrave, cruel to me. I never was cruel to any-body. You know I was civil to you; I was *very* civil—

Yes, yes, and very determined. You called me no names. I call you none, Miſs Byron. You were very civil. Hitherto *I* have not been uncivil. But remember, madam—But, ſweet and ever-adorable creature, and he claſped his arms about me, your very terror is beautiful! I can *enjoy* your terror, madam—And the ſavage would have kiſſed me. My averted head fruſtrated his intention; and at his feet I beſought him not to treat the poor creature, whom he had ſo vilely betrayed, with indignity.

I don't hit your fancy, madam!

Can you be a malicious man, Sir Hargrave?

You don't like my morals, madam!

And is this the way, Sir Hargrave, are theſe the means you take, to convince me that I ought to like them?

Well, madam, you ſhall prove the mercy in me, you would not ſhew. You ſhall ſee that I cannot be a malicious man; a revengeful man: And yet you have

have raiſed my pride. You ſhall find me a *moral* man.

Then, Sir Hargrave, will I bleſs you from the bottom of my heart!

But you know what will juſtify me, in every eye, for the ſteps I have taken. Be mine, madam Be legally mine. I offer you my honeſt hand. Conſent to be Lady Pollexfen—No puniſhment, I hope—Or, take the conſequence.

What, Sir! juſtify by ſo poor, ſo very poor, a compliance, ſteps that you have ſo baſely taken!—Take my life, Sir: But my hand and my heart are my own: They never ſhall be ſeparated.

I aroſe from my knees, trembling, and threw myſelf upon the window-ſeat, and wept bitterly.

He came to me. I looked on this ſide, and on that, wiſhing to avoid him.

You cannot fly, madam. You are ſecurely mine: And mine ſtill more ſecurely you ſhall be. Don't provoke me: Don't make me deſperate. By all that's Good and Holy—

He caſt his eyes at my feet; then at my face; then threw himſelf at my feet, and embraced my knees with his odious arms.

I was terrified. I ſcreamed. In ran one of the daughters—Good Sir! Pray Sir!—Did you not ſay you would be honourable?

Her Mother followed her in—Sir, Sir! In my houſe—

Thank God, thought I, the people here are better than I had reaſon to apprehend they were. But, O my Lucy, they ſeemed to believe, that marriage would make amends for every outrage.

Here let me conclude this Letter. I have a great deal more to ſay.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

WHAT a plague, ſaid the wretch to the women, do you come in for? I thought you knew your own Sex better than to mind a woman's ſqualling. They are always ready, ſaid the odious fellow, to put us in mind of the occaſion we ought to give them for crying out. I have not offered the leaſt rudeneſs—

I hope not, Sir. I hope my houſe—So ſweet a creature—

Dear bleſſed, bleſſed woman (frantic with terror, and mingled joy, to find myſelf in better hands than I expected—Standing up, and then ſitting down, I believe at every ſentence) Protect me! Save me! be my advocate! Indeed I have not deſerved this treacherous treatment. Indeed I am a good ſort of body (I ſcarce knew what I ſaid): All my friends love me: They will break their hearts, if any miſhap befal me: They are all good people: You would love them dearly if you knew them: Sir Hargrave may have better and richer wives than I: Pray prevail upon him to ſpare me to my friends, for *their* ſake. I will forgive him for all he has done.

Nay, dear Lady, if Sir Hargrave will make you his lawful and true wife, there can be no harm done, ſurely.

I will, I will, Mrs. Awberry, ſaid he. I have promiſed, and I will perform. But if ſhe ſtand in her own light—She expects nothing from my *morals*—If ſhe ſtand in her own light; and looked fiercely—

God protect me! ſaid I; God protect me!

The gentleman is without, Sir, ſaid the woman. O how my heart, at that moment, ſeemed to be at my throat! What gentleman, thought I? Some one come to ſave me!—O no!—

And

And inſtantly entered the moſt horrible-looking clergyman that I ever beheld.

This, as near as I can recollect, is his deſcription—A vaſt tall, big-boned, ſplay-footed man. A ſhabby gown; as ſhabby a wig; a huge red pimply face; and a noſe that hid half of it, when he looked on one ſide, and he ſeldom looked fore-right when I ſaw him. He had a dog's-eared common-prayer book in his hand, which once had been gilt; opened, horrid ſight! at the page of matrimony!

Yet I was ſo intent upon making a friend, when a man, a clergyman, appeared, that I heeded not, at his entrance, his frightful viſage, as I did afterwards. I puſhed by Sir Hargrave, turning him half round with my vehemence, and made Mrs. Awberry totter; and throwing myſelf at the clergyman's feet, Man of God, ſaid I, my hands claſped, and held up; Man of God! Gentleman! Worthy man!—A good clergyman muſt be all this!—If ever you had children! ſave a poor creature! baſely tricked away from all her friends! innocent! thinking no harm to any-body! I would not hurt a worm! I love every-body!—Save me from violence! Give not your aid to ſanctify a baſe action.

The man ſnuffled his anſwer thro' his noſe. When he opened his pouched mouth, the tobacco hung about his great yellow teeth. He ſquinted upon me, and took my claſped hands, which were burried in his huge hand: Riſe, madam! Kneel not to me! No harm is intended you. One queſtion, only: Who is that gentleman before me, in the ſilver-laced cloaths? What is his name?—

He is Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, Sir: A wicked, a very wicked man, for all he looks ſo!

The vile wretch ſtood ſmiling, and enjoying my diſtreſs.

O madam! A very hon-our-able man! bowing, like a ſycophant, to Sir Hargrave.

And who pray, madam, are you? What is your name?

Harriet Byron, Sir: A poor innocent creature (looking at my dreſs) tho' I make ſuch a vile appearance—Good Sir, your pity! And I ſunk down again at his feet.

Of Northamptonſhire, madam? You are a ſingle woman! Your Uncle's name—

Is Selby, Sir. A very good man—I will reward you, Sir, as the moſt grateful heart—

All is fair! All is above-board: All is as it was repreſented. I am above bribes, madam. You will be the happieſt of women before day-break—*Good people!*—The three women advanced.

Then I ſaw what an ugly wretch he was!

Sir Hargrave advanced. The two horrid creatures raiſed me between them. Sir Hargrave took my ſtruggling hand; and then I ſaw another ill-looking man enter the room, who I ſuppoſe was to give me to the hated man.

Dearly beloved, began to read the ſnuffling monſter—

O my Lucy! Does not your heart ake for your Harriet? Mine has ſeemed to turn over and over, round and round, I don't know how, at the recital.—It was ready to choak me at the time.

I muſt break off, for a few minutes.

LETTER XXXI.

Miſs BYRON. *In continuation.*

I WAS again like one frantic. Read no more! ſaid I; and, in my frenzy, daſhed the book out of the miniſter's hand, if a miniſter he was. I beg your pardon, Sir, ſaid I; but you muſt read no further. I am baſely betrayed hither. I cannot, I will not, be his.

Proceed,

Proceed, proceed, ſaid Sir Hargrave, taking my hand by force; virago as ſhe is, I will own her for my wife—Are you the *gentle*, the *civil*, Miſs Byron, madam? looking ſneeringly in my face.

Alas? my Lucy, I was no virago: I was in a perfect frenſy: But it was not an unhappy frenſy; ſince in all probability it kept me from falling into fits; and fits, the villain had ſaid, ſhould not ſave me.

Dearly beloved, again ſnuffled the wretch. O my Lucy! I ſhall never love theſe words. How may odious circumſtances invert the force of the kindeſt words! Sir Hargrave ſtill detained my ſtruggling hand.

I ſtamped, and threw myſelf to the length of my arm, as he held my hand. No *dearly beloved's*, ſaid I. I was juſt beſide myſelf. What to ſay, what to do, I knew not,

The cruel wretch laughed at me; *No dearly beloved's!* repeated he, Very comical, 'faith, and laughed again: But proceed, proceed, Doctor.

We are gathered together here in the ſight of God, read he on.

This affected me ſtill more, I adjure you, Sir, to the miniſter, by that God in whoſe ſight you read we are gathered together, that you proceed no further. I adjure you, Sir Hargrave, in the ſame tremendous Name, that you ſtop further proceedings. My life take: With all my heart, take my life: But my hand never, never, will I join with yours.

Proceed, Doctor: Doctor, pray proceed, ſaid the vile Sir Hargrave. When the day dawns, ſhe will be glad to own her marriage.

Proceed at your peril, Sir ſaid I. If you are really and truly a miniſter of that God whoſe preſence what you have read ſuppoſes, do *not* proceed: Do not make me deſperate.—Madam, turning to the widow, you are a Mother, and have given me room to hope you are a good woman; look upon me as if I were one of thoſe Daughters, whom I ſee before me: Could

you ſee one of them thus treated? Dear young women, turning to each, can you unconcernedly look on, and ſee a poor creature, tricked, betrayed, and thus violently, baſely, treated, and not make my caſe your own? Speak for me! Plead for me! Be my advocates! Each of you, if ye are women, plead for me, as you would yourſelves wiſh to be pleaded for, in my circumſtances, and were thus barbarouſly uſed!

The young women wept. The Mother was moved.

I wonder I kept my head. My brain was on fire.

Still, ſtill, the unmoved Sir Hargrave cried out, Proceed, proceed, Doctor: To-morrow before noon, all will be as it ſhould be.

The man who ſtood aloof (the ſlieſt, ſodden-faced creature I ever ſaw) came nearer—To the queſtion, Doctor, and to my part, if you pleaſe!—Am not I her Father?—To the queſtion, Doctor, if you pleaſe!—The gentlewoman will prepare her for what is to follow.

O thou *man!* of heart the moſt obdurate and vile! And will ye, looking at every perſon, one hand held up (for ſtill the vile man griped the other quite benumbed hand in his iron paw) and adjuring each, Will ye ſee this violence done to a poor young creature?—A ſoul, gentlewomen, you may have to anſwer for. I *can* die. Never, never, will I be his.

Let us women talk to the Lady by ourſelves, Sir Hargrave. Pray your honour, let us talk to her by ourſelves.

Ay, ay, ay, ſaid the parſon, by all means: Let the Ladies talk to one another, Sir. She may be brought to conſider.

He let go my hand. The widow took it. And was leading me out of the room—Not up-ſtairs, I hope, madam, ſaid I.

You ſhan't then, ſaid ſhe. Come, Sally; come, Deb; let us women go out together.

They led me into a little room adjoining to the parlour:

flour: And then, my ſpirits ſubſiding, I thought I ſhould have fainted away. I had more hartſhorn and water poured down my throat.

When they had brought me a little to myſelf, they pleaded with me Sir Hargrave's great eſtate.—What are riches to me? Dirt, dirt, dirt! I hate them. They cannot purchaſe peace of mind: I want not riches.

They pleaded his honourable love—I my invincible averſion.

He was a handſome man—The moſt odious in my eyes of the human ſpecies. Never, never, ſhould my conſent be had to ſanctify ſuch a baſeneſs.

My danger! And that they ſhould not be able to ſave me from worſe treatment—

How!—*Not able!*—Ladies, madam, is not this your own houſe? Cannot you raiſe a neighbourhood? Have you no neighbours? A thouſand pounds will I order to be paid into your hands for a preſent before the week is out; I pledge my honour for the payment; if you will but ſave me from a violence, that no worthy woman can ſee offered to a diſtreſſed young creature! —A thouſand pounds!—Dear Ladies! Only to ſave me, and ſee me ſafe to my friends!

The wretches in the next room, no doubt, heard all that paſſed. In at that moment came Sir Hargrave: Mrs. Awberry ſaid he, with a viſage ſwelled with malice, young Ladies, we keep you up; we diſturb you. Pray retire to your own reſt: Leave me to talk with this perverſe woman. She is mine.

Pray, Sir Hargrave, ſaid Mrs. Awberry—

Leave her to *me*, I ſay:—Miſs Byron, you *ſhall* be mine. Your Grevilles, madam, your Fenwicks, your Ormes, when they know the pains and the expence I have been at, to ſecure you, ſhall confeſs me their ſuperior—Shall confeſs—

In wickedneſs, in cruelty, Sir, you are every man's ſuperior.

You talk of cruelty, Miſs Byron! triumphing over ſcores of proſtrate Lovers, madam! You remember your treatment of me, madam! kneeling, like an abject wretch, at your feet! Kneeling for pity! But no pity could touch your heart, madam:—Ungrateful, proud girl!—Yet am I not humbling you: Take notice of that: I am not humbling you: I am propoſing to exalt you, madam.

Vile, vile debaſement, ſaid I.

To exalt Miſs Byron into Lady Pollexfen. And yet if you hold not out your hand to me—

He would have ſnatched my hand. I put it behind me. He would have ſnatched the other: I put that behind me too: And the vile wretch would then have kiſſed my undefended neck: But, with both my hands, I puſhed his audacious forehead from me. Charming creature! he called me, with paſſion in his look and accent: Then, Cruel, proud, ungrateful: And ſwore by his Maker, that if I would not give my hand inſtantly, inſtead of *exalting* me, he would *humble* me. Ladies, pray withdraw, ſaid he. Leave her to me: Either Lady Pollexfen, or what I pleaſe; rearing himſelf proudly up! She may be happy if ſhe will. Leave her to me.

Pray, Sir, ſaid the youngeſt of the two daughters; and wept for me.

Greatly hurt, indeed, to be the wife of a man of my fortune and conſequence! But leave her to me, I ſay.—I will ſoon bring down her pride: What a devil, am I to creep, beg, pray, entreat, and only for a *wife?* But, madam, ſaid the inſolent wretch, you will be mine upon eaſier terms, perhaps.

Madam, *pray* madam, ſaid the widow to me, conſider what you are about, and whom you refuſe. Can you have a handſomer man? Can you have a man of a greater fortune? Sir Hargrave means nothing but what is honourable. You are in his power—

In *his* power, madam! returned I: I am in *yours*.

You

You are miſtreſs of this houſe. I claim the protection of it. Have you not neighbours? *Your* protection I put myſelf under. Then claſping my arms about her, Lock me from him till you can have help to ſecure to you the privilege of your own houſe; and deliver me ſafe to my friends, and I will ſhare my fortune with your two Daughters.

The wicked man took the Mother and youngeſt Daughter each by her hand, after he had diſengaged the former from my claſping arms, and led them to the door. The elder followed them of her own accord. They none of them ſtruggled againſt going. I begged, prayed, beſought them not to go, and when they did, would have thruſt myſelf out with them: But the wretch, in ſhutting them out, ſqueezed me dreadfully, as I was half in, half out; and my noſe guſhed out with blood,

I ſcreamed: He ſeemed frighted: But inſtantly recovering myſelf—So, ſo, you have done your worſt!—You have killed me, I hope. I was out of breath; my ſtomach was very much preſſed, and one of my arms was bruiſed. I have the marks ſtill; for he clapt to the door with violence, not knowing, to do him juſtice, that I was ſo forward in the door-way.

I was in dreadful pain. I talked half wildly, I remember. I threw myſelf in a chair—So, ſo, you have killed me, I hope—Well, now I hope, now I hope, you are ſatisfied. Now may you moan over the poor creature you have deſtroyed: For he expreſſed great tenderneſs and conſternation; and I, for my part, felt ſuch pains in my boſom, that having never felt ſuch before, I really thought I was bruiſed to death: Repeating my fooliſh So, ſo,—But I forgive you, ſaid I—Only, Sir, call to the gentlewomen, Sir—Retire, Sir. Let me have my own Sex only about me. My head ſwam: my eyes failed me; and I fainted quite away.

LETTER XXXII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

I Underſtood afterwards that he was in the moſt dreadful conſternation. He had faſtened the door upon me and himſelf; and for a few moments was not enough preſent to himſelf to open it. Yet crying out upon his God to have mercy upon him, and running about the room, the women haſtily rapped at the door. Then he ran to it, opened it, curſed himſelf, and beſought them to recover me, if poſſible.

They ſaid I had death in my face: They lamented over me: My noſe had done bleeding: But, careful of his own ſafety in the midſt of his terror, he took my bloody handkerchief; if I did not recover, he ſaid, *that* ſhould not appear againſt him; and he haſted into the next room, and thruſt it into the fire; by which were ſitting, it ſeems, the miniſter and his helper, over ſome burnt brandy.

O gentlemen! cried the wretch, nothing can be done to night. Take this; and gave them money. The Lady is in a fit. I wiſh you well home.

The younger Daughter reported this to me afterwards, and what follows: They had deſired the maid, it ſeems, to bring them more firing, and a jug of ale; and they would ſit in the chimney-corner, they ſaid, till peep of day: But the ſame young woman who was taken off from her errand, to aſſiſt me, finding me, as they all thought, not likely to recover, ran in to them, and declared, that the Lady was dead, certainly dead; and what, ſaid ſhe, will become of us all? This terrified the two men. They ſaid, It was then time for them to be gone. Accordingly, taking each of them another dram, they ſnatched up their hats and ſticks, and away they hurried; hoping, the Doctor ſaid, that, as they were innocent, and only meant

meant to ſerve the gentleman, their names, whatever happened, would not be called in queſtion.

When I came a little to myſelf, I found the three women only with me. I was in a cold ſweat, all over ſhivering. There was no fire in that room: They led me into the parlour, which the two men had quitted; and ſat me down in an elbow chair; for I could hardly ſtand, or ſupport myſelf; and chafed my temples with Hungary-water.

Wretched creatures, men of this caſt, my Lucy, thus to ſport with the healths and happineſs of poor creatures whom they pretend to love! I am afraid I never ſhall be what I was. At times I am very ſenſible at my ſtomach of this violent ſqueeze.

The Mother and elder Siſter left me ſoon after, and went to Sir Hargrave. I can only gueſs at the reſult of their deliberations by what followed.

The younger Siſter, with compaſſionate frankneſs, anſwered all my queſtions, and let me know all the above particulars. Yet ſhe wondered that I could refuſe ſo handſome and ſo rich a man as Sir Hargrave.

She boaſted much of their reputation. Her Mother would not do an ill thing, ſhe ſaid, for the world: And ſhe had a Brother who had a place in the Cuſtom-houſe, and was as honeſt a man, tho' ſhe ſaid it, as any in it. She owned that ſhe knew my vile ſervant; and praiſed his fidelity to the maſters he had ſerved, in ſuch high terms, as if ſhe thought all duties were compriſed in that one, of obeying his principals, right or wrong. Mr. William, ſhe ſaid, was a pretty man, a genteel man, and ſhe believed he was worth money; and ſhe was ſure would make an excellent huſband. I ſoon found that the ſimple girl was in love with this vile, this ſpecious fellow. She could not bear to hear me hint any-thing in his diſfavour, as, by way of warning to her, I would have done. But ſhe was ſure Mr. William was a downright honeſt man; and that if he were guilty of any

bad thing, it was by command of thoſe to whom he owed duty.: And *they* are to be anſwerable for that, you know, madam.

We were broke in upon, as I was intending to aſk more queſtions (for I find this Wilſon was the prime agent in all this miſchief) when the elder Siſter called out the younger: And inſtantly came in Sir Hargrave.

He took a chair, and ſat down by me, one leg thrown over the knee of the other; his elbow upon that knee, and his hand ſupporting his bowed down head; biting his lips; looking at me, then from me, then at me again, five or ſix times, as in malice.

Ill-natured, ſpiteful, moody wretch! thought I (trembling at his ſtrange ſilence, after ſuch hurt as he had done me, and what I had endured, and ſtill felt in my ſtomach and arm) what an odious creature thou art!

At laſt I broke ſilence. I thought I would be as mild as I could, and not provoke him to do me farther miſchief. Well have you done, Sir Hargrave, (have you not?) to commit ſuch a violence upon a poor young creature that never did nor thought you evil!

I pauſed. He was ſilent.

What diſtraction have you given to my poor Couſin Reeves's! How my heart bleeds for them!

I ſtopt. He was ſtill ſilent.

I hope, Sir, you are ſorry for the miſchief you have done me; and for the pain you have given to my friends!—I hope, Sir—

Curſed! ſaid he.

I ſtopt, thinking he would go on: But he ſaid no more; only changing his poſture; and then reſumeing it.

Theſe people, Sir, ſeem to be honeſt people. I hope you deſigned only to terrify me. Your bringing me into no worſe company is an aſſurance to me that you meant better, than—

Devils all! interrupted he—

I thought

I thought he was going on; but he grinned, ſhook his head, and then again reclined it upon his hand.

I forgive you, Sir, the pain you have given me.—But my friends—As ſoon as day breaks (and I hope that is not far off) I will get the women to let my Couſin Reeves—

Then up he ſtarted—Miſs Byron, ſaid he, you are a *woman*; a *true* woman—And held up his hand, clenched. I knew not what to think of his intention.

Miſs Byron, proceeded he, after a pauſe, you are the moſt conſummate hypocrite that I ever knew in my life: And yet I thought that the beſt of you all could fall into fits and ſwoonings whenever you pleaſed.

I was now ſilent. I trembled.

Damn'd fool! aſs! blockhead! *woman's* fool!—I ought to be d—n'd for my credulous folly!—I tell you, Miſs Byron—Then he looked at me as if he were crazy; and walked two or three times about the room.

To be dying one half-hour, and the next to look ſo provoking—

I was ſtill ſilent.

I could *curſe* myſelf for ſending away the parſon. I thought I had known ſomething of women's tricks—But yet your arts, your hypocriſy, ſhall not ſerve you, madam. What I failed in *here*, ſhall be done *elſewhere*. By the great God of Heaven, it ſhall.

I wept. I *could not* then ſpeak.

Can't you go into fits again? Can't you? ſaid the barbarian; with an air of a piece with his words; and uſing other words of the loweſt reproach.

God deliver me, prayed I to myſelf, from the hands of this madman!

I aroſe, and as the candle ſtood near the glaſs, I ſaw in it my vile figure, in this abominable habit,

to which, till then, I had paid little attention. O how I ſcorned myſelf!

Pray, Sir Hargrave, ſaid I, let me *beg* that you will not terrify me further. I will forgive you for all you have hitherto done, and place it to my own account, as a proper puniſhment for conſenting to be thus marked for a vain and fooliſh creature. Your abuſe, Sir, give me leave to ſay, is low and unmanly: But in the light of a puniſhment I will own it to be all deſerved: And let here my puniſhment end, and I will thank you; and forgive you with my whole heart.

Your fate is *determined*, Miſs Byron.

Juſt then came in a ſervant-maid with a capuchin, who whiſpered ſomething to him: To which he anſwered, *That's well*—

He took the capuchin; the maid withdrew; and approached me with it. I ſtarted, trembled, and was ready to faint. I caught hold of the back of the elbow-chair.

Your fate is determined, madam, repeated the ſavage—Here, put this on—Now fall into fits again—Put this on!

Pray, Sir Hargrave—

And pray, Miſs Byron: What has not been completed here, ſhall be completed in a ſafer place; and that in my own way—Put this on, I tell you. Your compliance may yet befriend you.

Where are the gentlewomen? Where are—

Gone to reſt, madam—John, Frank, called he out.

In came two men-ſervants.

Pray, Sir Hargrave—Lord protect me—Pray, Sir Hargrave—Where are the gentlewomen?—Lord protect me!

Then running to the door, againſt which one of the men ſtood—Man, ſtand out of the way, ſaid I. But he did not: He only bowed.

I cried out, Mrs.——I forget your name: Miſs ——

And

And t'other Miſs —— I forget your names —— If you are good creatures, as I hoped you were—

I called as loud as my fears would let me.

At laſt came in the elder Siſter—O madam! good young gentlewoman! I am glad you are come, ſaid I.

And ſo am I, ſaid the wicked man.—Pray, Miſs Sally, put on this Lady's capuchin.

Lord bleſs me! for why? for what? I have no capuchin!

I would not permit her to put it on, as ſhe would have done.

The ſavage then wrapt his arms about mine, and made me ſo very ſenſible, by his force, of the pain I had had by the ſqueeze of the door, that I could not help crying out. The young woman put on the capuchin, whether I would or not.

Now, Miſs Byron, ſaid he, make yourſelf eaſy; or command a fit, it is all one: My end will be better ſerved by the latter—Miſs Sally give orders.

She ran out with the candle. Frank, give me the cloak, ſaid Sir Hargrave.

The fellow had a red cloak on his arm. His barbarous maſter took it from him. To your poſts, ſaid he.

The two men withdrew in haſte. Now, my deareſt life, ſaid he, with an air of inſult, as I thought, you command your fate, if you are eaſy.

He threw the cloak about me.

I begged, prayed, would have kneeled to him; but all was in vain: The tyger-hearted man, as Mr. Greville had truly called him, muffled me up in it, and by force carried me thro' a long entry to the fore-door. There was ready a chariot and ſix; and that Sally was at the door with a lighted candle.

I called out to her. I called out for her Mother; for the other Siſter. I beſought him to let me ſay but ſix words to the widow.

But no widow was to appear; no younger Siſter;

She was perhaps more tender-hearted than the elder: And in ſpite of all my ſtruggles, prayers, reſiſtance, he lifted me into the chariot.

Men on horſeback were about it. I thought *that* Wilſon was one of them; and ſo it proved. Sir Hargrave ſaid to that fellow, You know what tale to tell, if you meet with impertinents. And in he came himſelf.

I ſcreamed. Scream on, my dear, upbraidingly ſaid he; and barbarouſly mocked me, imitating, low wretch! the bleating of a ſheep [Could you not have killed him for this, my Lucy?] Then rearing himſelf up, Now am I lord of Miſs Byron! exulted he.

Still I ſcreamed for help; and he put his hand before my mouth, tho' vowing honour and ſuch ſort of ſtuff; and, with his unmanly roughneſs, made me bite my lip. And away laſhed the coachman with your poor Harriet.

LETTER XXXIII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

AS the chariot drove by houſes, I cried out for help once or twice, at ſetting out. But under pretence of preventing my taking cold, he tied a handkerchief over my face, head, and mouth, having firſt muffled me up in the cloak; preſſing againſt my arm with his whole weight, ſo that I had not my hands at liberty. And when he had done, he ſeized them, and held them both in his left-hand, while his right-arm thrown round me, kept me faſt on the ſeat: And except that now and then my ſtruggling head gave me a little opening, I was blinded.

But at one place on the road, juſt after I had ſcreamed, and made another effort to get my hands free, I heard voices; and immediately the chariot ſtopt. Then how my heart was filled with hope!

But,

But, alas! it was momentary. I heard one of his men ſay (that Wilſon I believe) The beſt of huſbands, I aſſure you, Sir; and ſhe is the worſt of wives.

I ſcreamed again, Ay, ſcream and be d—n'd, I heard ſaid in a ſtranger's voice, if that be the caſe. Poor gentleman! I pity him with all my heart. And immediately the coachman drove on again.

The vile wretch laughed; That's *you*, my dear; and hugged me round. *You* are the d—n'd wife. And again he laughed: By my ſoul, I am a charming contriver! Greville, Fenwick, Orme, where are you now?—By my ſoul, this will be a pretty ſtory to tell when all your fears are over, my Byron!

I was ready to faint ſeveral times. I begged for air: And when we were in an open road, and I ſuppoſe there was nobody in ſight, he vouchſafed to pull down the blinding handkerchief, but kept it over my mouth; ſo that, except now-and then that I ſtruggled it aſide with my head (and my neck is ſtill, my dear, very ſtiff with my efforts to free my face) I could only make a murmuring kind of noiſe.

The curtain of the fore-glaſs was pulled down, and generally the canvas on both ſides drawn up. But I was ſure to be made acquainted when we came near houſes, by his care again to blind and ſtifle me up.

A little before we were met by my deliverer, I had, by getting one hand free, unmuffled myſelf ſo far as to ſee (as I had gueſſed once or twice before by the ſtone pavements) that we were going thro' a town; and then I again vehemently ſcreamed. But he had the cruelty to thruſt a handkerchief into my mouth, ſo that I was almoſt ſtrangled; and my mouth was hurt, and is ſtill ſore, with that and his former violence of the like nature.

Indeed, he now-and-then made apologies for the cruelty, to which, he ſaid, he was compelled, by my invincible obſtinacy, to have recourſe. I was ſorely hurt, he ſaid, to be the wife of a man of his conſider-

ation! But I *ſhould* be that, or worſe. He was *in for it* (he ſaid more than once) and *muſt* proceed. I might ſee that all my reſiſtance was in vain. He had me in his net: And, d—n him, if he were not revenged for all the trouble I had given him. You keep no terms with me, my Byron, ſaid he once; and d—n me, if I keep any with you!

I doubted not his malice: His Love had no tenderneſs in it: But how could I think of being conſenting, as I may ſay, to ſuch barbarous uſage, and by a man ſo truly odious to me? What a ſlave had I been in ſpirit, could I have qualified on ſuch villanous treatment as I had met with! or had I been able to deſert myſelf!

At one place the chariot drove out of the road, over rough ways, and little hillocks, as I thought, by its rocking; and then, it ſtopping, he let go my hands, and endeavoured to ſooth me. He begged I would be pacified, and offered, if I would forbear crying out for help, to leave my eyes unmuffled all the reſt of the way. But I would not, I told him, give ſuch a ſanction to his barbarous violence.

On the chariot's ſtopping, one of his men came up, and put an handkerchief into his maſter's hands, in which were ſome cakes and ſweet-meats; and gave him alſo a bottle of ſack, with a glaſs. Sir Hargrave was very urgent with me to take ſome of the ſweet-meats, and to drink a glaſs of the wine: But I had neither ſtomach nor will to touch either.

He eat himſelf very cordially. God forgive me, I wiſhed in my heart, there were pins and needles in every bit he put into his mouth.

He drank two glaſſes of the wine. Again he urged me. I ſaid, I hoped I had eat and drank my laſt.

You have no dependence upon my honour, madam, ſaid the villain; ſo cannot be diſappointed much, do what I will. Ungrateful, proud, vain, obſtinate, he called me.

What

What ſignifies, ſaid he, ſhewing politeneſs to a woman who has ſhewn none to me, tho' ſhe was civil to every other man? Ha, ha, ha, hah! What, my ſweet Byron, I don't hit your *fancy!—You don't like my morals!* laughing again. My lovely fly, ſaid the inſulting wretch, huggiing me round in the cloak, how prettily have I wrapt you about in my web!

Such a provoking low wretch!—I ſtruggled to free myſelf; and unhooked the curtain of the fore-glaſs: But he wrapt me about the cloſer, and ſaid he would give me his garter for my girdle, if I would not ſit ſtill, and be orderly. Ah, my charming Byron! ſaid he, your opportunity is over—All your ſtruggles will not *avail* you—Will not *avail* you. That's a word of your own, you know. I will, however, forgive you, if you promiſe to love me now. But if you ſtay till I get you to the allotted place; then, madam, take what follows.

I ſaw that I was upon a large, wild, heath-like place, between two roads, as it ſeemed. I aſked nothing about my journey's end. All I had to hope for as to an eſcape (tho' then I began to deſpair of it) was upon the road, or in ſome town. My journey's end, I knew, muſt be the beginning of new trials; for I was reſolved to ſuffer death rather than to marry him. What I now was moſt apprehenſive about, was, of falling into fits; and I anſwered to his barbarous inſults as little as poſſible, that I might not be provoked beyond the little ſtrength I had left me.

Three or four times he offered to kiſs me; and curſed my pride for reſiſting him; making him claſp a cloud, was his ſpeech (aiming at wit) inſtead of his Juno; calling the cloak a cloud.

And now, my dear Byron, ſaid he, if you will not come to a compromiſe with me, I muſt dreſs you again for the journey. We will ſtop at a town a little further (beckoning to one of his men, and, on his approaching, whiſpering to him, his whole body out of the

the chariot) and there you ſhall alight; and a very worthy woman, to whom I ſhall introduce you, will perſuade you, perhaps, to take refreſhment, tho' I cannot.

You are a very barbarous man, Sir Hargrave. I have the misfortune to be in your power. You may dearly repent the uſage I have already received from you. You have made my life of no eſtimation with me. I will not contend.

And tears ran down my cheeks. Indeed, I thought my heart was broke.

He wrapt me up cloſe, and tied the handkerchief about my mouth and head. I was quite paſſive.

The chariot had not many minutes got into the great road again, over the like rough and ſometimes plaſhy ground, when it ſtopt on a diſpute between the coachman, and the coachman of another chariot-and-ſix, as it proved.

Sir Hargrave had but juſt drawn my handkerchief cloſer to my eyes, when this happened. Hinder not my tears from flowing, ſaid I; ſtruggling to keep my eyes free, the cloak enough muffling me, and the handkerchief being over my mouth; ſo that my voice could be but juſt heard by him, as I imagine.

He looked out of his chariot, to ſee the occaſion of this ſtop; and then I found means to diſengage one hand.

I heard a gentleman's voice directing his own coachman to give way.

I then puſhed up the handkerchief with my diſengaged hand, from my mouth, and pulled it down from over my eyes, and cried out for help: Help, for God's ſake.

A man's voice (it was my deliverer's, as it happily proved) bid Sir Hargrave's coachman proceed at his peril.

Sir Hargrave, with terrible oaths and curſes, ordered him to proceed, and to drive thro' all oppoſition.

The

The gentleman called Sir Hargrave by his name; and charged him with being upon a bad deſign.

The vile wretch ſaid, he had only ſecured a runaway wife, eloped to, and intending to elope from, a maſquerade, to her adulterer [Horrid!]: He put aſide the cloak, and appealed to my dreſs.

I cried out, No, no, no, five or ſix times repeated; but could ſay no more at that inſtant, holding up then both my diſengaged hands for protection.

The wicked man endeavoured to muffle me up again, and to force the handkerchief, which I had then got under my chin, over my mouth; and brutally curſed me.

The gentleman would not be ſatisfied with Sir Hargrave's ſtory. He would ſpeak to *me*. Sir Hargrave called him impertinent, and other names; and aſked, Who the devil he was? with rage and contempt.—The gentleman, however, aſked me, and with an air that promiſed deliverance, if I were Sir Hargrave's wife.

No, no, no, no—I could only ſay.

For my own part, I could have no ſcruple, diſtreſſed as I was, and made deſperate, to throw myſelf into the protection, and even into the arms, of my deliverer; tho' a very fine young gentleman. It would have been *very* hard, had I fallen from bad to bad; had the ſacred name of protector been abuſed by *another* Sir Hargrave, who would have had the *additional* crime of betraying a confidence to anſwer for. But, however this had proved, an eſcape from the preſent evil was all I had in my head at the time.

But you may better conceive, than I can expreſs, the terror I was in, when Sir Hargrave drew his ſword, and puſhed at the gentleman with ſuch words as denoted (for I could not look that way) he had done him miſchief. But when I found my oppreſſor, my low-meaning, and ſoon after low-laid oppreſſor, pulled out of the chariot, by the brave, the gallant man (which was

was done with ſuch force, as made the chariot rock) and my protector ſafe; I was as near fainting with joy, as before I had been with terror. I had ſhaken off the cloak, and untied the handkerchief.

He carried me in his arms (I could not walk) to his own chariot.

I heard Sir Hargrave curſe, ſwear, and threaten. I was glad, however, he was not dead.

Mind him not, madam, fear him not, ſaid Sir Charles Grandiſon [You know his noble name, my Lucy]: Coachman, drive not over your maſter: Take care of your maſter; or ſome ſuch words he ſaid, as he lifted me into his own chariot. He came not in, but ſhut the chariot-door, as ſoon as he had ſeated me.

He juſt ſurveyed, as it were, the ſpot, and bid a ſervant let Sir Hargrave know who he was; and then came back to me.

Partly thro' terror, partly thro' weakneſs, I had ſunk to the bottom of the chariot. He opened the door, entered, and, with all the tenderneſs of a Brother, ſoothed me, and lifted me on the ſeat once more. He ordered his coachman to drive back to Colnebrook. In accents of kindneſs, he told me, that he had there at preſent the moſt virtuous and prudent of Siſters, to whoſe care he would commit me, and then proceed on his journey to town.

How irreſiſtibly welcome to me was his ſupporting arm, thrown round me, as we *flew* back, compared to that of the vile Sir Hargrave!

Mr. Reeves has given you an account from the angelic Siſter — O my Lucy, they are a pair of angels!

I have written a long, long Letter, or rather five Letters in one, of my diſtreſſes, of my deliverance: And, when my heart is ſtronger, I will ſay more of the perſons, as well as minds, of this excellent Brother and his Siſter.

But what ſhall I do with my gratitude? O my dear,

I am *overwhelmed* with my gratitude: I can only expreſs it in ſilence before them. Every look, if it be honeſt to my heart, however, tells it: Reverence mingles with my gratitude—Yet there is ſo much eaſe, ſo much ſweetneſs, in the behaviour of both—O my Lucy! Did I not find that my veneration of both is equal; did I not, on examination, find, that the amiable Siſter is as dear to me, from her experienced tenderneſs, as her Brother from his remembred bravery (which muſt needs mingle awe with my eſteem); in ſhort, that I love the Siſter, and revere the Brother; I ſhould be afraid of my gratitude.

I have over-written myſelf. I am tired. O my Grandmamma, you have never yet, while I have been in London, ſent me your ever valued bleſſing under your own hand: Yet, I am ſure I had it; and *your* bleſſings, my dear Uncle and Aunt Selby; and your prayers, my Lucy, my Nancy, and all my loves; elſe my deliverance had not perhaps followed my preſumptuous folly, in going dreſſed out, like the fantaſtic wretch I appeared to be, at a vile, a fooliſh, maſquerade.—How often, throughout the ſeveral ſtages of my diſtreſs, and even in my deliverance, did I turn my eye *to* myſelf, and *from* myſelf, with the diſguſt that made a part, and that not a light one, of my puniſhment!

And ſo much, my Lucy, for maſquerades, and maſquerade-dreſſes, for ever!

Pray let not any-body unneceſſarily be acquainted with this ſhocking affair: Particularly neither Mr. Greville nor Mr. Fenwick. It is very probable, that they (eſpecially Mr. Greville) would be for challenging Sir Hargrave, were it only on a ſuppoſition that it would give him an intereſt in me in the *eye of the world*. You know that Mr. Greville watches for all opportunities to give himſelf conſequence with me.

Were any farther miſchief to happen to any-body, I ſhould be grieved beyond meaſure. Hitherto I have

reaſon

reaſon to think, that a tranſaction ſo ſhocking is not very unhappily concluded. May the vile man ſit himſelf down ſatisfied, and I ſhall be willing to do ſo too; provided I never more behold his face.

* *

MR. Reeves will ſend you, with the above packet, a letter from Sir Charles Grandiſon, incloſing one from that vile Wilſon. I can write no more juſt now, and they will ſufficiently explain themſelves.

Adieu, my deareſt Lucy. I need not ſay how much I m, and ever will be,

Your faithful and affectionate
HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXXIV.

Sir CHA. GRANDISON, *to* ARCH. REEVES, *Eſq.*

Dear Sir, *Canterbury, Feb.* 22.

THE incloſed long Letter is juſt now brought to me. I pretend not to judge of the writer's penitence. Yet his confeſſions ſeem ingenuous; and he was not under any obligation to put them on paper.

As I preſume that you will not think it adviſeable to make the *ineffectual* attempt upon Miſs Byron public by a proſecution, perhaps your condeſcending to let the man's Siſter know, that her Brother, if in earneſt, may ſecurely purſue the honeſt purpoſes he mentions, may ſave the poor wretch from taking ſuch courſes as might be fatal, not only to himſelf, but to innocent perſons who otherwiſe may ſuffer by his being made deſperate

The man, as you will ſee by this Letter, if you had not a ſtill *ſtronger* proof, has abilities to do miſchief. He has been in bad hands, and he tells us, from his youth upwards, or he might have been an uſeful member of ſociety. He is a young man; and if yet he could be made *ſo*, his reformation will take from the number

number of the profligate, and add to that of the hopeful; and who knows how wide the circle of his acquaintance is, and how many of them may be influenced by his example either way? If he marry the not-diſhoneſt young woman, to whom he ſeems to be contracted, may not your lenity be a means of ſecuring a whole future family on the ſide of moral honeſty?

His crime, as the attempt was fruſtrated, is not capital: And, not to mention the ſervice of ſuch an evidence as this, ſhould Sir Hargrave ſeek for a legal redreſs, as he ſometimes weakly threatens, my hope makes me ſee a further good that may be brought about by this man's reformation: Wicked maſters cannot execute their baſe views upon the *perſons* of the innocent, without the aſſiſtance of wicked ſervants. What a neſt of vipers may be cruſhed at once, or, at leaſt, rendered unhurtful, by depriving the three monſters he names of the aid of ſuch an agent? Men who want to ſave appearances, and have eſtates to forfeit, will ſometimes be honeſt of neceſſity, rather than put themſelves into the power of *untried* villains.

You will be ſo good as to make my compliments to your Lady, and to *our* lovely ward. You ſee, Sir, that I join myſelf with you in the honour of that agreeable relation.

I hope the dear Lady has perfectly recovered her health and ſpirits. I am, good Mr. Reeves,

Your moſt faithful and obedient Servant,

CHARLES GRANDISON.

LETTER XXXV.

To Sir CHARLES GRANDISON, *Bart.*

Saturday, Feb. 18.

IN what an odious light muſt that wretch appear before the worthieſt of men, who cannot but abhor himſelf.

I am

I am the unhappy man who was hired into the ſervice of the beſt of young ladies: Whom I was the means of betraying into the power of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, from the Ball in the Hay-market on Thurſday night laſt.

Your honour has made yourſelf an *intereſt* in Miſs Byron's fate, as I may ſay, by your powerful protection. Pardon me if I give you ſome account of myſelf, and of tranſactions which perhaps will otherwiſe never be known: And this in juſtice to all round.

My parentage was honeſt, My education was above my parentage. I ſet out with good principles: But I fell into a bad ſervice. I was young, and of a good natural diſpoſition; but had not virtue enough to reſiſt a temptation: I could not ſay No, to an unlawful thing, when my principals commanded by aſſent.

I was, at *firſt* ſetting out, by favour of friends, taken as clerk to a merchant. In proceſs of time I tranſacted his buſineſs at the Cuſtom-houſe. He taught me to make light of oaths of office; and this by degrees made me think light of all moral obligations, and laid the foundation of my ruin.

My maſter's name was Bagenhall. He died; and I was to ſeek employ. His Brother ſucceeded to his fortune, which was very large: He was brought up to no buſineſs: He was a gentlemen: His ſeat is near Reading. I was recommended by him to the ſervice of a gentleman who was nominated to go abroad on a foreign embaſſy. I will name his name, leſt your honour would imagine I have any deſign to evade the ſtricteſt truth; Sir Chriſtopher Lucas; I was to be this gentleman's maſter of the horſe abroad.

The firſt ſervice my new maſter employed me in, was to try to get for him the pretty Daughter of an honeſt farmer.

I had been out of place for a twelvemonth. Had I had twenty ſhillings aforehand in the world, I would, I think, have ſaid No. Nevertheleſs I conſulted, in

confidence,

confidence, my late maſter's brother upon it. The advice he gave me, was, not to boggle at it: But if, he ſaid, I could manage the matter ſo, as to cheat Sir Chriſtopher, and get the girl for him, and keep the ſecret, he would give me 50*l.* I abhorred the double treachery of young Mr. Bagenhall: But undertook to ſerve Sir Chriſtopher; and carried on a treaty with the farmer for his Daughter; as if ſhe were to be the wife of Sir Chriſtopher; but not to be owned till he returned from abroad; no, not even if ſhe ſhould prove with child.

I found, in the courſe of my viſits at the farmer's, ſo much honeſty both in Father and Mother, and ſo much innocence in the Daughter, that my heart relented; and I took an opportunity to reveal Sir Chriſtopher's baſe deſign to them; for the girl was deſigned to be ruined the very firſt moment that Sir Chriſtopher could be alone with her. Your honour may believe, that I injoined all three in ſtrict ſecrecy.

Nevertheleſs this contriving devil of a maſter found a way to get the young woman by other means; and, in amorous dalliance, ſhe told him to whom he was obliged for not ſucceeding before.

In rage he turned me out of his ſervice, in the moſt diſgraceful manner; but without giving any other reaſons, than that he knew me to be a villain; and that I knew myſelf to be one; nor would he give me a character: So I was quite reduced; and but for the kindneſs of a Siſter, who keeps an inn in Smithfield, I ſhould have ſtarved, or been obliged to do worſe.

I ſhould have told your honour, that the poor farmer and his wife both died of grief in half a year. An honeſt young man, who dearly loved the young woman, was found drowned ſoon after: It is feared he was his own executioner. Sir Chriſtopher went not on his embaſſy. His preparations for it, and his expenſive way of life, before and after, reduced him: And he has been long a beggar, as I may ſay. The poor young

young woman is now, if living, on the town. I ſaw her about half a year ago in St. Martin's Round-houſe, taken up as a common proſtitute, and charged with picking a pocket. She was a pretty creature, and had a very pious turn, when I knew her firſt. Her father had gone beyond himſelf in her education: And this was the fruit. What has ſuch a man as Sir Chriſtopher to anſwer for!—But it is come home to him. I rejoice that this wickedneſs was not added to my ſcore.

But heavy ſcenes I had enough afterwards. Being utterly deſtitute, except what my Siſter did for me, and not enduring to be a burden to her, I threw myſelf upon my maſter Bagenhall. He employed me in mean offices, till his pander died (he is a very profligate man, Sir!): and then he *promoted* me to a *ſtill meaner*.

In this way, I grew a ſhameleſs contriver. He introduced me to Sir Hargrave Pollexſen, and to Mr. Merceda, a Portugueſe Jew. In the ſervice of theſe three maſters, good heaven forgive me! what villanies was I not the means of perpetrating! Yet I never was ſo hardened, but I had temporary remorſes. But theſe three gentlemen would never let me reſt from wickedneſs: Yet they kept me poor and neceſſitous; as the only means to keep me what they called *honeſt*; for they had often reaſon to think, that had I had any other means of ſubſiſtence, I would have been *really* honeſt.

I was now Mr. Bagenhall's conſtant ſervant. Sir Hargrave and Mr. Merceda uſed to borrow me: But I muſt ſay Sir Hargrave is an innocent man to the other two. They careſſed me, I ſpeak it to my ſhame, as a man fit for their turn. I had contrivance; temper; I knew ſomething of every-body. But my Siſter knows my frequent compunctions; and that I hated the vile courſe I was in. She uſed to lecture me enough. She is a good woman.

Will your honour have patience with me a little longer?

Sir

Sir Hargrave on the ſeventh of this month came to my maſter Bagenhall at Reading, with whom he had double buſineſs: One was to take a bond and judgment of him (Sir Hargrave is no better than an uſurer): Mr. Bagenhall has lived a moſt extravagant life: The other was to borrow me. Mr. Merceda had a ſcheme on foot at the ſame time, which he was earneſt to engage me in; but it was too ſhocking; and Mr. Bagenhall came into Sir Hargrave's.

Sir Hargrave told them, he deſigned nothing *more* than a *violation*, if he could get my aſſiſtance, of the moſt beautiful woman in the world. And, Sir, to ſee the villany of the other two; they both, unknown to each other, made propoſals to me, to trick Sir Hargrave, and to get the Lady, each for himſelf.

But to *me*, Sir Hargrave ſwore, that he was fully reſolved to leave this wicked courſe of life. Bagenhall and Merceda, he ſaid, were devils; and he would marry, and have no more to ſay to them. All that was in his view was honeſt marriage. He ſaid he had never been in the Lady's company but once, and that was the day before at Lady Betty Williams's. He ſaid he went thither, knowing ſhe was to be there: For having for ſome time had it in his head to marry, this was the Lady he had pitched upon in his mind, from the character he had of her from every mouth at the Northampton races.

Now, ſaid he, I ſhall have ſome difficulty to obtain her, notwithſtanding my fortune is ſo great; for every one who ſees her is in love with her; and he named ſeveral gentlemen who laid cloſe ſiege to her.

She brought a ſervant up with her, ſaid he, who pines after the country, and is actually gone, or ſoon will. Her Couſin enquires of every one after a proper ſervant for her. You, Wilſon, ſaid he, are handſome and genteel: He was pleaſed to ſay ſo. You have a modeſt humble look: You know all the duties of a ſervant: Get yourſelf entertained, and your fortune is

made for life, if by your means I obtain the Lady. I have already tendered myself, said he. Perhaps she will have me in a few days. I don't expect to be denied, if she be disengaged, as it is said she is. If you can get into her service, you will find out every-thing. This is all that is to be done: But you must never mention my name, nor ever know any-thing of me, as I go and come.

Sir Hargrave declared, that his heart was *burnt up* with the Love of the Lady: And if he succeeded (as he had little doubt, even without my help, had I been actually in Mercedа's service) you will, said he, as my Lady's servant, be mine of course; you shall never wear a livery; and you shall be my gentleman, till I can get a place for you in the customs. This, may it please your honour, he knew I had long aimed at; and it had been often promised by himself, and my other two masters; and was their first promise when they wanted to engage me in any of their schemes, tho' they never thought more of it when the service was over. If I got but myself engaged, I was, on the day I entered into my Lady's service, to have as an earnest ten guineas.

Encouraged by such promises (and the project being an honester one than ever Sir Hargrave, or either of the other two, had sought to engage me in) I offered my service to my Lady; and, on Mr Bagenhall's writing a good character of me, was accepted.

I could have been happy in the service of this Lady, all the days of my life. She is all goodness: All the servants, every-body, gentle and simple, adored her: But she, unexpectedly, refusing to have Sir Hargrave, and he being afraid that one of her three or four Lovers would *cut him out*, he resolved to take more violent measures than he had at first intended

If any man was ever mad in Love, it was Sir Hargrave. But then he was as mad with anger to be refused. Sir Hargrave was ever thought to be one of the proudest men

men in England: And he complained that my Lady uſed him worſe than ſhe did any-body elſe. But it was not *her* way to uſe any-body ill, I ſaw that.

Nevertheleſs he was reſolved to ſtrike a *bold ſtroke for a wife*, as were his words from the title of a play: And between us we ſettled the matter in one night: For I had found means to get out unknown to the family.

It will be treſpaſſing too much upon your honour's patience, to be very particular in our contrivances. I will be as brief as poſſible.

My Lady was to go to a Maſquerade. I got into the knowlege of every-thing about it. The maids were as full of the matter as their maſter and miſtreſſes.

It was agreed to make the chairmen fuddled. Two of *Mr. Merceda's footmen* were to undertake the taſk. Brandy was put into their liquor, to haſten them.

They were ſoon overcome. The weather was cold: They drank briſkly, and were laid up ſafe. I then hired two chance chairmen, and gave them orders, as had been contrived.

I had twenty guineas given me in hand for my encouragement; in which were included the promiſed ten.

I had, when I was my firſt maſter Bagenhall's clerk, made acquaintance with ſeveral clerks of the Cuſtom-houſe, particularly with one Awberry, a ſober modeſt man; who has two Siſters; to one of whom I am contracted, and always, for two years paſt, intended to make my wife, as ſoon as I ſhould be in any way to maintain her. The Mother is a widow. All of them are very honeſt people.

Mr. Awberry the Brother being aſſured by me (and I was well aſſured of it myſelf, and had no doubt about it) that marriage was intended; and knowing Sir Hargrave's great eſtate (and having indeed ſeen Sir Hargrave on the occaſion, and received his proteſta-

tions of honour) engaged his Mother and Siſters in it; and the reſult, as to them and me, was, that I was to receive, as ſoon as the knot was tied, a hundred guineas beſides the twenty; and moreover an abſolute promiſe of a place; and twenty pounds a year till I got it; and then my marriage with young Mrs. Awberry was to follow.

The widow has an annuity of thirty pounds, which, with her Son's ſalary, keeps them above want.

She lives at Paddington. There is a back door and garden, as it happens, convenient to bring any-body in, or carry any-body out, ſecretly; and hither it was reſolved, if poſſible, that the Lady ſhould be brought, and a Fleet parſon and his clerk ready ſtationed, to perform the ceremony; and then all that the bridegroom wiſhed was to follow of courſe.

Sir Hargrave doubted not (tho' he was fruitful in contrivances, and put many others in practice) but he ſhould be detected if he carried the Lady to his own houſe. And as he was afraid that the chairmen (notwithſtanding ſeveral other artful contrivances) would be able to find out the place they carried her to, he had ordered his chariot and ſix to be at the widow Awberry's by ſix in the morning, with three ſervants on horſeback, armed, and a horſe and piſtols beſides. After marriage and conſummation, he was reſolved to go to his houſe on the foreſt, but not to ſtay there; but to go to Mr. Merceda's houſe near Newberry, where he doubted not but he ſhould be ſecret till he thought fit to produce the Lady, as Lady Pollexſen: And often, very often, did he triumph on the victory he ſhould obtain over her other Lovers, and over her own proud heart, as he would have it to be.

The parſon, Sir, came: The clerk was there: But what with fits, prayers, tears, and one thing or other (at one time the Lady being thought irrecoverable, having received ſome unintended hurt in her ſtruggling to get out of a door, as I heard it was) Sir Hargrave

Hargrave in terror diſmiſſed the parſon; and reſolved to carry the Lady (who by that time was recovered) in the chariot to his ſeat at Windſor; and then, ſtaying there only to marry, go to Newberry: And from thence break out by degrees, as the matter ſhould be taken.

My Lady ſcreamed, reſiſted, and did all that woman could do, to get free: And more than once, people who heard her cry out for help were put on a wrong ſcent: And had we not met with your honour (who would ſee with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears) the affair had been all over in the way Sir Hargrave wiſhed, and was at ſo much pains and expence to effect. For, Sir, the chariot generally drove ſo faſt, that before paſſengers could have *reſolved* whether to interfere or not, we ſhould have been out of ſight or reach.

Sir Hargrave is in the greateſt rage with us all, becauſe we ſtood not better by him. He refuſes any favour to me, and threatens to piſtol me the moment he ſees me. That's to be my reward.

We were four at ſetting out from Paddington; but one of the ſervants was diſpatched to prepoſſeſs an old ſervant of Sir Hargrave's mother, at Colnebrook, who keeps there a kind of haberdaſhery ſhop; and where he propoſed to get ſome refreſhment for the Lady, if he could make her take any. For my part, I wonder how ſhe kept out of fits on the road. She had enow of them at Paddington.

The two ſervants who ſtaid about Sir Hargrave, are diſcharged with all the marks of indignation that a maſter incenſed by ſuch a diſappointment could expreſs; and, as I ſaid before, he is reſolved to piſtol me the moment he ſees me. Yet I too well ſerved him for the peace of my conſcience.

A coach-and-four was ordered to carry the widow and her two Daughters to Reading, to the New Inn there, where they were to reſide for a week or ſo, till

all was blown over; and that they might be out of the way of anſwering queſtions: And my *Brother* Awberry, as I call him, and hope to make him (for he is a very honeſt man) was to go to them there.

And there, in all probability, had Sir Hargrave ſucceeded, and been as good as his word, ſhould I have been the huſband of as tender-hearted a young woman as any in the pariſh ſhe lives in.

Here is a very long Letter, may it pleaſe you, Sir. I have ſhortened it, however, as much as I could: But in hatred to myſelf, and the vile ways I have, by exceſs of good-nature, and by meeting with wicked maſters, been drawn into—For the clearing of my Siſters character, who lives in credit among her neighbours, and of every other perſon who might otherwiſe have been ſuſpected—In juſtice to Mrs. Awberry's and her two Daughters, and her Son's characters—And in juſtice *ſo far* to Sir Hargrave's, as that he intended marriage (and had he *not*, he would have found no friends in his deſigns at Paddington) and ſo far as to clear him of having not offered the leaſt incivility to my Lady—[Had he intended, or been provoked ſo to do, he was too well watched by the widow, and her Daughters, to have been permitted; and that by my own requeſt, which was, that they ſhould be ready to run in whenever they heard her cry out, and that they would not leave Sir Hargrave alone with my Lady for ſix minutes, till their hands were joined in wedlock]—In juſtice I ſay to all theſe perſons, I thought proper thus to give you, Sir, all that I knew relating to this wicked tranſaction. And if, may it pleaſe your honour, I were to be taken up, I could ſay no more before a magiſtrate; except this, which I had like to have forgot; which is, that had it not been for me, ſome miſchief might have been done, between Sir Hargrave's ſervants and yours, if not to your honour's perſon.

All that I moſt humbly beg, is the pardon of ſo

ſweet

ſweet a Lady. I have choſen, ever-to-be-honoured Sir, to write to you, whoſe goodneſs is ſo generally talked of, and who have ſo nobly redeemed and protected her. Mr. Reeves, I know, has ſuffered too much in his mind to forgive me. He is a worthy gentleman. I am ſorry for the diſturbance I have given him. I have hopes given me, that I ſhall get employment on the Keys, or as a tide-waiter extraordinary.

Pleaſe the Lord, I will never, never more, be the tool of wicked maſters. All I wiſh for is, to be able to do juſtice to the Love of an honeſt young woman; and I am reſolved, whether ſo enabled or not, to ſtarve, rather than to go any more, no, not for a ſingle hour, into the ſervice of the iniquitous gentlemen I have ſo often named in this long Letter.

If I might be aſſured, that I may purſue unmoleſted any honeſt calling, ſo as that I may not be tempted or driven into unhappy courſes, my heart would be at reſt.

There might have been murder in this affair: That ſhocks me to think of. O Sir, good, excellent, brave, and the moſt worthy of gentlemen, you have given to *me* as great a deliverence, as you have to the *Lady*: Yea, greater; for mine may be a deliverence, if I make a proper uſe of it, of ſoul as well as body. Which God grant, as alſo your honour's health and proſperity, to the prayers of

Your Honour's ever-devoted
Humble Servant,
WILLIAM WILSON.

I thought I had ſomething elſe to ſay: Something it is of *high* importance: Your life is threatened, Sir: God preſerve your precious life. Amen!

LETTER XXXVI.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Friday, Feb. 24.

MY Couſin Reeves has given aſſurance to the Siſter of that Wilſon, that he may, unmoleſted by any of us, purſue the beſt means he can fall upon for the obtaining of an honeſt livelihood.

In every-thing it is determined to follow the advice of my deliverer.

What a Letter is that fellow's! What men are there in the world!

Of ſuch we have read: But I hoped, that I might have eſcaped ſuffering by any ſuch.

We are extremely diſturbed at the fellow's poſtſcript: and the more, as we are told by ſeveral people, that Sir Hargrave will not ſit down quietly; but threatens vengeance upon Sir Charles. I wiſh I had not come to London.

I hope my Grandmamma's ſpirits are not affected by what ſhe knows of the matter. It was very good of my Aunt Selby to take the meaſures ſhe did, in ſoftening every circumſtance, and not to let her know anything till the danger was over. But indeed it was but the natural effect of that prudence which regulates all the actions of my honoured Aunt.

My Grandmamma has ſuch ſtrength of mind, that now ſhe knows I am ſafe, and not unhappy, I dare ſay ſhe will by degrees bear to hear my *narrations* read. She will be more uneaſy if ſhe thinks any-thing is kept from her.

Yet I know that her tenderneſs and her love for her Harriet will coſt her ſome anguiſh, ſome ſighs, ſome tears, as ſhe reads, or hears read, the cruelty her girl has been treated with: Who, ſo tenderly brought up, ſo greatly indulged, never before knew what harſh-

neſs

neſs was. But then ſhe will have more joy, I hope, in my deliverance, than ſhe will have pain in my ſufferings. And pray let her know, that I am every day leſs and leſs ſenſible of the pain in my ſtomach, of which I was ſo apprehenſive, as really, at the time, to think it a mortal blow. My Grandmamma has told us girls, you know, my Lucy, twenty and twenty frightful ſtories of the vile enterprizes of men, againſt innocent creatures; and will therefore call to mind ſtories which have concluded much worſe than, bleſſed be God, mine has done.

* * *

Juſt now I have received a congratulatory pacquet of Letters:

One from my Aunt Selby, ſuch a ſweetly kind, ſuch a truly maternal Letter!

One from my deareſt Grandmamma. I will put it next my heart, whenever I feel there any of that pain, of which ſhe is ſo kindly apprehenſive.

One from Nancy—Dear girl!—She is very generous to forget her own malady to condole and congratulate me. Your Brother James, my Lucy, has written me a very kind Letter. He is a good young man: God keep him ſo! What a miſchievous creature is a bad man!

I have a charming Letter, by the poſt, from my Godfather Deane: He has heard nothing of what has happened; and I am ſure is too ſolicitous for my welfare, to take it well, if I do not let him know ſomething about it: I will therefore ſoon write to him.

But *your* Letter, my Lucy!—What, I warrant, you thought I had forgot *your* Letter in the enumeration of the contents of the precious pacquet! If I *had*, your goodneſs, your love, might have made you forgive me: But I never would have forgiven myſelf.

But you and I, my dear, write for all to ſee what we write: And ſo I reſerved yours to be laſt-mentioned.

Only I ſlid in my Godfather Deane's between; not becauſe I love him better than I do my Lucy — No, that is impoſſible! — But becauſe I had a mind to ſhew you, that I was haſtening to be quite well, and ſo aſſumed my little ſaucy tricks, and ſurprizes, as if it were *poſſible* for me to be heedleſs, where my love to my Lucy was in the queſtion.

And ſo you expect the particular character and deſcription of the perſons of this more than amiable Brother and Siſter. Need you to have told me that you do? And could you think that after having waſted ſo many quires of paper in giving you the characters of people, many of whom deſerved not to be drawn out from the common croud of mortals, I would forbear to give you thoſe of perſons who adorn the age in which they live, and even human nature?

You don't queſtion, you ſay, if I begin in their praiſes, but my gratitude will make me write in a *ſublime ſtyle*; ſo you phraſe it; and are ready, you promiſe me, to take with allowance, all the fine things from me, which Mr. Reeves has already taught you to expect.

You may be right in your expectations, as far as I know; for my Grandfather (ſo many years ago) uſed to ſay, that his little Byron was an enthuſiaſt in her gratitude. But, however, when I ſay any-thing of the exalted minds, of the expanded hearts, of the amiable manners, of this happy Brother and Siſter, which ſeems to exceed, in my praiſes, the bounds you will all be willing to ſet me, then let the overflowings be carried to account of the *grateful* enthuſiaſm, and *only* to that.

Which ſhall I begin with? You will have a ſharp look-out upon me, you ſay: Ah, my Lucy! I know what you mean. But I am ſafe from every-thing but my gratitude, I will aſſure you.

And ſo, if I begin with the character of the Brother, then will you join with my Uncle, ſhake your head,

head, and cry, Ah! my Harriet! If I begin with the Sister, will you not say, that I save my choicest subject for the last? How difficult is it to avoid censure, when there is a resolution taken to be censorious.

Well, but keep a *look-out*, if you please, my Lucy: Not the least shadow of reserve shall it give to my heart: My pen shall be honest to that heart; and I shall be benefited, I am sure, by the *faithful wounds* of such affectionate, and equally-beloved as revered *friends*—And so, Pen, take thy course.

Miss Grandison—Yes, my volant, myself-conducted quill, begin with the Sister, say my Lucy what she pleases—

Miss Grandison is about twenty four; of a fine stature: She has dignity in her aspect; and a very penetrating black eye, with which she does what she pleases: Her hair is black, very fine, and naturally curls: She is not fair; but her complexion is delicate and clear, and promises a long duration to her loveliness: Her features are generally regular: Her nose is a little aquiline; but that is so far from being a blemish, that it gives a kind of majesty to her other features: Her teeth are white and even: Her mouth is perfectly lovely; and a modest archness appears in her smiles, that makes one both love and fear her, when she begins to speak. She is finely shaped; and, in her air and whole appearance, perfectly genteel.

She herself says, That before her Brother came to England, she was thought to be proud, pert, and lofty: But I hardly believe her; for the man lives not, it is my belief, who in fourteen months time (and Sir Charles has not been longer arrived) could so totally eradicate those qualities in a mind of which they had taken possession, as that they should not occasionally shew themselves.

She has charming spirits. I dare say she sings well, from the airs she now-and-then warbles in the gaiety of her heart, as she goes up and down

ſtairs: She is very polite; yet has a vein of raillery, that, were ſhe *not* polite, would give one too much apprehenſion for one's eaſe: But I am ſure ſhe is frank, eaſy, and good-humoured: And, by turning over all the juſt and handſome things which are attributed to herſelf, to her Brother's credit, ſhe muſt be equally humble and generous.

She ſays, ſhe has but lately taken a very great likeing to reading: But I am ready to queſtion what ſhe ſays, when ſhe ſpeaks any-thing that ſome would conſtrue to her diſadvantage. She pretends, that ſhe was too volatile, too gay, too airy, to be confined to ſedentary amuſements. Her Father, however, according to the genteeleſt and moſt laudable modern education for women, had given her a maſter, who taught her Hiſtory and Geography; in both which ſhe *acknowleges* ſhe made ſome progreſs. In Muſic, ſhe *owns* ſhe has ſkill: But I am told by her maid who attended me by her young Lady's direction, and who delights to praiſe her miſtreſs, that ſhe reads and ſpeaks French and Italian; that ſhe writes finely; and is greatly admired for her wit, prudence, and obligingneſs. Nobody, ſaid Jenny (who is a ſenſible young woman, a clergyman's daughter, well educated, and very obligeing) can ſtand againſt her good-natured raillery: Her Brother, ſhe ſays, is not ſpared: But he takes delight in her vivacity, and gives way to it; when it is eaſy to ſee, that he could take her down, if he pleaſed. And then, added this good young woman, ſhe is an excellent manager in a family, finely as ſhe is educated [I rejoiced to hear that, for the honour of our reading Ladies, as in Miſs Clements's caſe]: She knows every-thing, and how to direct what ſhould be done, from the private family-dinner, to a ſumptuous entertainment: And every day inſpects, and approves, or alters, the bill of fare: By the way, my Lucy, ſhe is an early riſer—Do you mind that? And ſo can do every-thing with eaſe, pleaſure, and without hurry

and

and confuſion: For all her ſervants are early riſers of courſe. What ſervants can for ſhame be in bed, at a reaſonable hour to be up, when they have a maſter or miſtreſs's example for early riſing?

Yet this fine Lady loves to go to the public places, and often goes, and makes a brilliant figure there. She has time for them, and earns her pleaſures by her early riſing.

Miſs Grandiſon, Jenny tells me, has two humble ſervants [I wonder ſhe has not two and-twenty]: One is Sir Walter Watkyns, a man of a large eſtate in Somerſetſhire; the other is Lord G. ſon of the Earl of G.; but neither of them highly approved by her: Yet Jenny ſays, they are both of them handſome men, and admired by the Ladies: This makes me afraid, that they are modern men; and pay their court by the exterior appearance, rather than by interior worth. Who, my Lucy, that has heard what my late Grandfather has ſaid, and my Grandmamma ſtill ſays, of the men in their youthful days, will not ſay, that we have our lots caſt in an age of Petits Maitres, and inſignificants?

Such an amiable woman is Miſs Charlotte Grandiſon — May I be found, on further acquaintance, but half as amiable in her eyes, as ſhe is in mine!—Don't be jealous, Lucy! I hope I have a large heart. I hope there is room in it for half a dozen ſweet female friends!—Yes, altho' another Love were to intervene. I could not bear, that even the affection due to the man of my choice, were I to marry, ſhould, like Aaron's rod, ſwallow up all the reſt.

But now for her Brother—My deliverer!—

But pray now, Lucy, don't you come with your ſharp *look-out*: I warrant you will expect on this occaſion to read the tumults of the poor girl's heart in her character and deſcription of a man, to whom ſhe is ſo much obliged!—But what if ſhe diſappoint you, and yet do juſtice to his manifold excellencies?

What

What if ſhe find ſome faults in him, that his Siſter has not?

Parading Harriet, methinks you ſay! Teazing girl! Go on, go on; leave it to *us* to find you out: And take care that the very faults you pretend to diſcover, do not paſs for a colour only, and lead to your detection.

Thank you, Lucy, for your caution: But I will not be obliged to it. My pen ſhall follow the dictates of my heart; and if it be as honeſt to me, as I think it is to every-body elſe, I hope I have nothing to fear either from *your* look-out, or, which is ſtill a ſharper, my Uncle Selby's.

Sir Charles Grandiſon, in his perſon, is really, a very fine man. He is tall; rather ſlender than full: His face in ſhape is a fine oval: He ſeems to have florid health; health confirmed by exerciſe.

His complexion ſeems to have been naturally too fine for a man: But as if he were above being regardful of it, his face is overſpread with a manly ſunnineſs [I want a word] that ſhews he has been in warmer climates than England: And ſo it ſeems he has; ſince the Tour of Europe has not contented him. He has viſited ſome parts of Aſia, and even of Afric, Egypt particularly.

I wonder what buſineſs a *man* has for ſuch fine teeth, and ſo fine a mouth, as Sir Charles Grandiſon might boaſt of, were he vain.

In his aſpect there is ſomething great and noble, that ſhews him to be of rank. Were kings to be choſen for beauty and majeſty of perſon, Sir Charles Grandiſon would have few competitors. His eye—Indeed, my Lucy, his eye ſhews, if poſſible, more of ſparkling intelligence than that of his Siſter—

Now pray be quiet, my dear Uncle Selby! What is Beauty in a man to me? You all know, that I never thought Beauty a qualification in a man.

And yet, this grandeur in his perſon and air is accompanied

accompanied with ſo much eaſe and freedom of manners, as engages our love with our reverence. His good breeding renders him very acceſſible. His Siſter ſays, he is always the firſt to break thro' the reſtraints, and to baniſh the diffidences, that will generally attend perſons on a quite new acquaintance. He *may*; for he is ſure of being acceptable in whatever he does or ſays.

Very true, Lucy: Shake your head, if you pleaſe.

In a word, he has ſuch an eaſy, yet manly politeneſs, as well in his dreſs, as in his addreſs (no ſingularity appearing in either) that were he *not* a fine figure of a man, but were even plain and hard-featured, he would be thought (what is far more eligible in a man, than mere Beauty) very agreeable.

Sir Charles Grandiſon, my dear, has travelled, we may ſay, to ſome purpoſe.

Well might his Siſter tell Mr. Reeves, that whenever he married, he would break half a ſcore hearts.

Upon my word, Lucy, he has too many perſonal advantages for a woman, who loved him with *peculiarity*, to be eaſy with, whatever may be *his* virtue, from the foible our Sex in general love to indulge for handſome men. For, O my dear, women's eyes are ſad giddy things; and will run away with their ſenſe, with their underſtandings, beyond the power of being overtaken either by ſtop thief, or hue-and-cry.

I know that here you will bid me take care not to increaſe the number of the giddy: And ſo I will, my Lucy.

The good ſenſe of this real fine gentleman is not, as I can find, ruſted over by fourneſs, by moroſeneſs: He is above quarrelling with the world for trifles: But he is ſtill more above making ſuch compliances with it, as would impeach either his honour or conſcience. Once Miſs Grandiſon, ſpeaking of her Brother, ſaid, My Brother is valued by thoſe who know him beſt, not ſo much for being a handſome man; not ſo much

much for his birth and fortune; nor for this or that ſingle worthineſs; as for being, in the great and yet comprehenſive ſenſe of the word, a *good man*. And at another time ſhe ſaid, that he lived to himſelf, and to his own heart; and that tho' he had the happineſs to pleaſe every-body, yet he made the judgment or approbation of the world matter but of ſecond conſideration. In a word, added ſhe, Sir Charles Grandiſon, my *Brother* (and when ſhe looks proud, it is when ſhe ſays, *my Brother*) is not to be miſled either by falſe glory, or falſe ſhame, which he calls, The great ſnares of virtue.

What a man is this, ſo to act!—What a woman is this, ſo to diſtinguiſh her Brother's excellencies!

What a poor creature am I, compared to either of them! And yet I have had my admirers. So perhaps may ſtill more faulty creatures among their inferiors. If, my Lucy, we have ſo much good ſenſe as to make fair compariſons, what have we to do but to look up, rather than downward, in order to obtain the grace of humility?

But let me tell you, my dear, that Sir Charles does not *look* to be ſo great a ſelf-denier, as his Siſter ſeems to think him, when ſhe ſays, he lives to himſelf, and to his own heart, rather than to the opinion of the world.

He dreſſes to the faſhion, rather richly, 'tis true, than gaudily; but ſtill richly: So that he gives his fine perſon its full conſideration. He has a great deal of vivacity in his whole aſpect; as well as in his eye. Mrs. Jenny ſays, that he is a great admirer of handſome women. His equipage is perfectly in taſte, tho' not ſo much to the glare of taſte, as if he aimed either to inſpire or ſhew emulation. He ſeldom travels without a ſet, and ſuitable attendants; and, what I think ſeems a little to favour of ſingularity, his horſes are not docked: Their tails are only tied up when they are on the road. This I took notice of when we came

to

to town. I want, methinks, my dear, to find ſome fault in his outward appearance, were it but to make you think me impartial; my gratitude to him, and my veneration for him, notwithſtanding.

But if he be of opinion that the tails of theſe noble animals are not only a natural ornament, but are of real uſe to defend them from the vexatious inſects that in ſummer are ſo apt to annoy them (as Jenny once told me was thought to be his reaſon for not depriving his cattle of a defence, which nature gave them) how far from a diſpraiſe is this humane conſideration! And how, in the more minute as well as we may ſuppoſe in the greater inſtances, does he deſerve the character of the man of mercy, who will be merciful to his beaſt!

I have met with perſons, who call thoſe men *good*, that yet allow themſelves in liberties which no good man can take. But I dare ſay, that Miſs Grandiſon means by *good*, when ſhe calls her Brother, with ſo much pride, *a good man*, what I, and what you, my Lucy, would underſtand by the word.

With ſo much ſpirit, life, and gallantry, in the firſt appearance of Sir Charles Grandiſon, you may ſuppoſe, that had I not been ſo dreadfully terrified and ill-uſed, and ſo juſtly apprehenſive of worſe treatment; and had I been offered another protection; I ſhould hardly have acted the frighted bird flying from the hawk, to which, as Mr. Reeves tells me, Sir Charles (tho' politely, and kindly enough, yet too ſenſibly for my recollection) compared me.

Do you wonder, Lucy, that I cannot hold up my head, when I recollect the figure I muſt make in that odious Maſquerade-habit, hanging by my claſping arms about the neck of ſuch a young gentleman? Can I be more effectually humbled than by ſuch a recollection? And yet is not this an inſtance of that *falſe ſhame* in me, to which Sir Charles Grandiſon is ſo greatly ſuperior?

Surely,

Surely, ſurely, I have *had* my puniſhment for *my* compliances with this fooliſh world. Falſe glory, and falſe ſhame, the poor Harriet has never been totally above. Why was I ſo much indulged? Why was I allowed to ſtop ſo many miles ſhort of my journey's end, and then complimented, as if I had no farther to go?—But ſurely, I was paſt all *ſhame*, when I gave my conſent to make ſuch an appearance as I made, among a thouſand ſtrangers, at a Maſquerade!

But now, I think, ſomething offers of blame in the character of this almoſt faultleſs man, as his Siſter, and her Jenny, repreſent him to be.

I cannot think, from a hint given by Miſs Grandiſon, that he is quite ſo frank, and ſo unreſerved, as his Siſter is. Nay, it was more than a hint: I will repeat her very words: She had been mentioning her own openneſs of heart, and yet confeſſing that ſhe would have kept one or two things from him, that affected him not. 'But as for my Brother, ſaid ſhe, 'he winds one about, and about, yet ſeems not to 'have more curioſity than one would wiſh him to 'have. Led on by his ſmiling benignity, and fond of 'his attention to my prattle, I have caught myſelf in 'the midſt of a tale of which I intended not to tell him 'one ſyllable.

'O Sir Charles! where am I got? have I ſaid; and 'ſuddenly ſtopt.

'Proceed, my Charlotte! No reſerves to your 'neareſt friend.

'Yet he has *his*, and I have winded and winded 'about him, as he had done about me; but all to no 'purpoſe.

'Nevertheleſs, he has found means, inſenſibly, to 'ſet me on again with my own ſtory, till I had told 'him all I knew of the matter; and all the time I was 'intending only that my frankneſs ſhould be an exam-'ple to him; when he, inſtead of anſwering my 'wiſhes, double-locked the door of his heart, and left

'not

'not ſo much as the key-hole uncovered by which I 'might have peeped into it; and this in one or two 'points, that I thought it imported me to know. And 'then have I been ready to ſcold.'

Now this reſerve to ſuch a Siſter, and in points that ſhe thinks it imports her to know, is what I do not like in Sir Charles. A *friend* as well as a Siſter! ought there to be a ſecret on one ſide, when there is none on the other? Very likely, he would be as reſerved to a wife: And is not marriage the higheſt ſtate of friendſhip that mortals can know? And can friendſhip and reſerve be compatible? Surely, No.

His Siſter, who cannot think he has one fault, excuſes him, and ſays, that her Brother has no other view in drawing her on to reveal her own heart, but the better to know how to ſerve and oblige her.

But then, might not the ſame thing be ſaid in behalf of the curioſity of ſo generous a Siſter? Or, is Sir Charles ſo conſcious of his own ſuperiority, as to think he can give advice to her, but wants not hers to him? Or, thinks he meanly of our Sex, and highly of his own? Yet there are but two years difference in their age: And from ſixteen to twenty-four, I believe, women are generally more than two years aforehand with the men in ripeneſs of underſtanding; tho', after that time, the men may ripen into a ſuperiority.

This obſervation is not my own; for I heard a very wiſe man once ſay, That the intellects of women uſually ripen ſooner than thoſe of men; but that thoſe of men, when ripened, like trees of ſlow growth, generally hold longer, are capable of higher perfection, and ſerve to nobler purpoſes.

Sir Charles has ſeen more of the world, it may be ſaid, than his Siſter has: He has travelled. But is not human nature the ſame in every country, allowing only for different cuſtoms?—Do not love, hatred, anger, malice, *all* the paſſions in ſhort, good or bad, ſhew themſelves by like effects in the faces, hearts, and

and actions of the people of every country? And let men make ever ſuch ſtrong pretenſions to knowlege, from their far fetch'd and dear-bought experience, cannot a penetrating ſpirit learn as much from the paſſions of a Sir Hargrave Pollexfen in England, as it could from a man of the ſame or the like ill qualities, in Spain, in France, or in Italy? And why is the Grecian Homer, to this day, ſo much admired, as he is in all theſe nations, and in every other nation where he has been read, and will be, to the world's end, but becauſe he writes from nature? And is not the language of nature one language throughout the world, tho' there are different modes of ſpeech to expreſs it by?

But I ſhall go out of my depth. All I mean (and, from the frankneſs of my own heart, you will expect from me ſuch a declaration) is, that I do not love that a man ſo *nearly* perfect, be his motives what they will, ſhould have reſerves to ſuch a Siſter. Don't you think, Lucy, that this ſeems to be a kind of *fault* in Sir Charles Grandiſon? Don't you think, that it would mingle ſome *fear* in a Siſter's love of him? And ſhould one's love of ſo amiable a Brother be daſhed or allayed with *fear?* He is ſaid to be a good man: And a good man I dare ſay he *is:* What ſecrets can a good man have, that ſuch a Siſter, living with him in the ſame houſe, and diſdaining not, but, on the contrary, priding herſelf in, the title of her Brother's *houſekeeper*, ſhould not be made acquainted with? Will a man ſo generous look upon her as he would upon a *mere* houſekeeper?—Does not confidence engage confidence?—And are they not by *nature*, as well as inclination, friends?

But I fanſy I am acting the world, in its malevolence, as well as impertinence: That world, which thinks itſelf affronted by great and ſuperior merit; and takes delight to bring down exalted worth to its own level. But, at leaſt, you will collect from what I have written, an inſtance of my *impartiality;* and

ſee, that, tho' bound to Sir Charles by a tie of gratitude which never can be diſſolved, I cannot excuſe him, if he be guilty of a diffidence and reſerve to his generous Siſter, which ſhe is above ſhewing to him.

If I am allowed to be ſo happy, as to cultivate this deſirable acquaintance [And I hope it is not their way to leave thoſe whom they have relieved and raiſed, in order to ſhine upon, and bleſs, only *new* objects of compaſſion] then will I cloſely watch every ſtep of this excellent man; in hope, however, to find him as perfect as report declares him, that I may fearleſsly make him my theme, as I ſhall delight to make his Siſter my example. And if I were to find any *conſiderable* faults in him, never fear, my dear, but my gratitude will enlarge my charity in his favour. But I ſhall, at the ſame time, arm my heart with thoſe remembred failings, leſt my gratitude ſhould endanger it, and make me a hopeleſs fool.

Now, my Uncle, do not be *very* hard on your Niece. I am ſure, very ſure, that I am not in danger *as yet:* And indeed I will tell you, by my Lucy, whenever I find out that I am. Spare, therefore, my dear Uncle Selby, all your *conjectural conſtructions.*

And indeed you ſhould in pity ſpare me, my dear Sir, at preſent; for my ſpirits are ſtill weak: I have not yet forgiven myſelf for the Maſquerade affair; eſpecially ſince Mr. Reeves has hinted to me, that Sir Charles Grandiſon (as he judges from what he dropt about that fooliſh amuſement) approves not of Maſquerades. And yet ſelf-partiality has ſuggeſted ſeveral ſtrong pleas in my favour; indeed by way of extenuation only. How my judge, CONSCIENCE, will determine upon thoſe pleas, when counſel has been heard on both ſides, I cannot ſay: Yet I think, that an acquittal from this Brother and Siſter would go a great way to make my conſcience eaſy.

I have not ſaid one half of what I intended to ſay of this extraordinary man. But having imagined, from

the

the equal love I have to his admirable Siſter, that I had found ſomething to blame him for, my impartiality has carried me out of my path; and I know not how to recover it, without going a great way back. Let therefore what I have further to ſay, mingle in with my future narratives, as new occaſions call it forth.

But yet I will not ſuffer any other ſubject to interfere with that which fills my heart with the praiſes, the due praiſes, of this worthy Brother and Siſter; to which I intended to conſecrate this rambling and very imperfect Letter: And which here I will conclude, with aſſurances (however needleſs I hope they are) of duty, love, and gratitude, where ſo much due from

Your HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXXVII.

Miſs BYRON. *In Continuation.*

Feb. 24, & 25.

NOW have I near a week to go back, my Lucy, with my current narrative, having been thrown behind-hand by the long Letters I have been obliged to write, to give you an account of my diſtreſs, of my deliverance, of the characters of this noble Brother and Siſter, and a multitude of coincidences and reflections, which all my dear friends expect, as they fall in, from the pen of their Harriet. And this Letter ſhall therefore be a kind of diary of that week; only that I will not repeat what my Couſin Reeves has told me has written.

On *Monday* I was conducted home in ſafety, by my kind protector, and his amiable Siſter.

Mrs. Reeves, Lady Betty, and Miſs Clements, are in love with them both.

My Couſin has told you, how much they diſappointed us, in declining to ſtay dinner. What ſhall we do,

do, if they are not as fond of our company as we are of theirs? We are not uſed to be ſlighted, you know: And to be ſlighted by thoſe we love, there can be no bearing of that: But I hope this will not be the caſe.

At tea, the name of Sir Rowland Meredith carried me inſtantly down.

Mr. Reeves had told the good Knight, on his calling on the Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and on this day, before we returned from Colnebrook, that I had been over-fatigued at the Maſquerade on Thurſday night [*And ſo I was*]; and was gone a little way out of town. *Carried* he ſhould have ſaid: I was carried, with a witneſs!

Sir Rowland took notice, that I muſt have had a ſmart illneſs for the time, by my altered countenance. You are, and muſt be, ever lovely, Miſs Byron: But I think you look not quite ſo ſerene, you don't look ſo *compoſed*, as you uſed to do. But I was afraid you were denied to my longing ſight. I was afraid you would let your papa go down to Caermarthen, without giving him an opportunity to bleſs his croſs girl. It is in vain, I fear, to urge you—He ſtopt, and looked full in my face—Pray, Sir Rowland, ſaid I, how does my *Brother* Fowler?

Why, ay, that's the deuce of it! Your *Brother* Fowler. But as the honeſt man ſays, ſo ſay I; I will not teaze you. But never, never, will you have—But no more of that—I come to take my leave of you. I ſhould have ſet out this very morning, could I have ſeen you on Saturday, or yeſterday: But I ſhall go to-morrow morning early. You are glad of that, madam, I am ſure.

Indeed, Sir Rowland, I ſhall always reſpect and value you: And I hope I ſhall have your good wiſhes, Sir—

Yes, yes, madam, you need not doubt it. And I will humble all the proud women in Wales, by telling them of Miſs Byron.

You tell me, my Lucy, that you were all moved at one of the converſations I gave you between the Knight, Mr. Fowler, and myſelf.

Were I to be as particular in my account of what paſſed on Sir Rowland's taking leave of me, as I was on that other occaſion, and were you to judge by the effect his honeſt tenderneſs had on me, as I craved his bleſſing, and as he bleſſed me (the big tears, unheeded by himſelf, ſtraying down his reverend cheeks) I think you would have been in like manner affected.

Mr. Fowler is to go down after him—If—if—if, ſaid the Knight, looking fervently in my face—

I ſhould be glad, I ſaid, to ſee, and to wiſh my *Brother* a good journey.

Tueſday morning early I had a kind enquiry after my reſt, from Miſs Grandiſon, in her Brother's name, as well as in her own. And about eleven o'clock came the dear Lady herſelf. She would run up ſtairs to me, following Sally—In her dreſſing-room, ſay you?—She ſhall not come down.

She entered with the maid—Writing, my dear! ſaid ſhe. I one day hope, my Harriet, you will ſhew me all you write—There, there (ſitting down by me) no buſtle. And how *does* my fair friend?—*Well*—I ſee *very* well—*To* a Lover—or *of* a Lover—that's the ſame thing.—

Thus, ſweetly familiar, ran ſhe on.

Mrs. Reeves entered: Excuſe me, madam, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon: This is but one of my flying viſits, as I call them: My next ſhall be to *you*. But perhaps I may not make it in form neither: We are relations, you know. How does Mr. Reeves? He is a good man. At home?—

He is, madam, and will be rejoiced—

I know he will—Why, madam, this our Byron, our Harriet, I ſhould ſay, looks charmingly!—You had beſt lock her up. There are many more Sir Hargrave's in the world, than there are Miſs Byron's.

She

She told me, that Sir Charles had ſet out that morning early for Canterbury. He will be abſent two or three days, ſaid ſhe. He charged me with his compliments. He did nothing but talk of his new-found Siſter, from the time he parted with you. I ſhall promote *your* intereſt with him, in order to ſtrengthen *my own*. I want to find him out.

Some Love-engagements, I ſuppoſe, madam? ſaid Mrs. Reeves—It is impoſſible but the Ladies—

The Ladies! Ay, that's the thing! The deuce is in them! They will not ſtay to be aſked. Theſe men, the beſt of them, love nothing but what is attended with difficulty. But all his Love-matters he keeps to himſelf; yet knows all mine—Except one little *entanglement*—Mr. Reeves hears not what we ſay (looking about her): But you, my dear, ſhall reveal to me your *ſneaking* paſſion, if you have one, and I will diſcover mine—But not to *you*, Mrs. Reeves. No married women ſhall I truſt with what lies in the innermoſt fold of my heart. Your huſbands are always the wiſer *for what you* know; tho' *they* can keep their own counſel: And then, Harriet, Satan-like, the ungenerous wretches, becoming both tempters and accuſers, laugh at us, and make it wonderful for a woman to keep a ſecret.

The Ladies will not ſtay to be aſked, Lucy!—An odd hint!—*Theſe men, the* beſt *of them, love nothing but what comes to them with difficulty:—He keeps all his Love-matters to himſelf.*—ALL! my Lucy!—But indeed ſhe had ſaid before, that if Sir Charles married, *half a dozen hearts would be broken!*

This is nothing to *me*, indeed. But, once more, I wonder why a man of a turn ſo laudable, ſhould have *any* ſecrets? The more a good man permits any one to know of his heart, the more good he might do, by way of example.—And has he, can he have, *ſo many* Love-ſecrets, and yet will he not let them tranſpire to ſuch a Siſter?—Whom (and ſo ſhe once hinted)

it imported to know ſomething of them. But, *he* knows beſt. I am very impertinent to be more concerned for his Siſter, than ſhe is for herſelf. But I do love her. And one can no more bear to have thoſe ſlighted whom we love, than one's ſelf.

It is very difficult, Lucy, to know one's ſelf. I am afraid I have a little ſpice of cenſoriouſneſs in my temper, which I knew nothing of till now: But, no, it is not cenſoriouſneſs neither I cannot be ſo mean, as to be cenſorious: And yet I can now, methinks (for the firſt time) a little account for thoſe dark ſpirits who may be too much obliged; and who, deſpairing to be able ever to return the obligation, are ready to quarrel with the obliger.

Spiteful men ſay, that we women know not ourſelves; know not our own hearts. I believe there is ſomething of truth in the aſperſion: But as men and women are *Brothers and Siſters*, as I may ſay, are not the men *equally* cenſurable? And ſhould not we women *ſay* ſo, were we to be as ſpiteful as they? Muſt it needs be, that a Daughter of the ſame Father and Mother muſt be more ſilly, more unſteady, more abſurd, more impertinent, than her Brother? I hope not.

Mrs. Reeves, not knowing, as ſhe ſaid afterwards, but Miſs Grandiſon might have ſomething to ſay to me, withdrew.

I believe I told you laſt Sunday, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon, of a Couſin that we have: A good-natured young fellow: He ſupped with us laſt night. Sir Charles was ſo full of your praiſes, yet not letting him into your hiſtory, that he is half-wild to ſee you.

God forbid, thought I, when ſhe had gone only thus far, that this *Couſin* ſhould be propoſed!—What an eaſy thing is it, my Lucy, to alarm a woman on the ſide of her vanity!

He breakfaſted with me this morning, continued ſhe, after Sir Charles had ſet out; and knowing that I intended to make you a flying viſit, he beſought me to

to take him with me: But I would not, my dear, bring an inundation of new admirers upon you: He has a great acquaintance; and is very bold, tho' not indecent: He is thought to be a modern wit, you muſt know; and, to ſpeak after an admirable writer, a *minute* philoſopher; and thinks he has ſomething to ſay for himſelf when his Couſin is not preſent. Before Sir Charles arrived, and when we were in expectation of his coming, being appriſed that Sir Charles had a ſerious turn, he threatened to play upon him, and, as he phraſed it, to *bamboozle* him; for theſe wits and witlings have a language peculiar to themſelves. But on Sir Charles's arrival, in two converſations, he drew in his horns, as we ſay; and now reverences thoſe good qualities which he has not, however, the grace to imitate. Now I will not anſwer, but you may have a viſit from him to ſee the loveliеſt woman in England. If he comes, ſee him, or not, as you pleaſe; and think not yourſelf under any civil obligation to my Brother, or me, to go out of your own way: But I hope he will not be ſo impertinent. I don't wiſh you to ſee him out of my Brother's company; becauſe you will ſee him then to his own advantage. And yet he has ſuch a notion that we women love to be admired, and to have handſome things ſaid to us, that he imagines, the viſit of a man, made for *that* purpoſe, will give him as free a welcome to the fineſt woman in the world, as painters give to thoſe who come to ſee their pictures, and for the like reaſon. But no more of Mr. Grandiſon. Yet I thought proper to prepare you, if he ſhould take ſo confident a liberty.

I thanked her.

Well but, my dear, you ſeem to have a long parcel of writing before you: One, two, three, four—Eight leaves—Upon my word!—But Mr. Reeves told me you are a writer; and that you gave an account of all that befel you, to *our* Grandmother Shirley, to *our*

Uncle and Aunt Selby, to *our* Couſins Lucy and Nancy—You ſee I remember every name: And will you one day let me ſee what you write?

Moſt willingly, madam—

Madam! interrupted ſhe. So formal! *Charlotte* ſay.

With all my heart, my ever-amiable, my ever-kind, Charlotte.

So, ſo—Well may the men ſay, we love flattery, when rather than want it, we will flatter one another.

I was going to diſclaim flattery: Huſh, huſh, huſh, my dear! I doubt not your ſincerity. You are a grateful and good girl: But dare you, will you, ſhew me all and every-thing about that Greville, that Orme, that Fowler, that Fenwick?—You ſee, I forget none of the names that your Couſin Reeves told me of on Saturday laſt, and which I made you talk of laſt Sunday.

All and every-thing, Miſs Grandiſon: But will you tell me of *your* gentleman?

Will I! No doubt of it: How can young women be together one quarter of an hour, and not lead one another into talk of their Lovers? Lord, my dear, thoſe ſecrets, Sir Charles once ſaid, are the cement of young women's friendſhips.

And could Sir Charles—

Could Sir Charles!—Yes, yes, yes. Do you think a man can be a judge of human nature, and leave *women* out of the queſtion? Why, my dear, he finds us out in a minute. Take care of yourſelf, Harriet—If—

I ſhall be afraid of him—

What if you have a good conſcience, my dear!—

She then looked very archly. She made me bluſh.

She looked *more* archly. I bluſhed, I believe, a deeper dye.

Did I not tell you, Lucy, that ſhe could do what ſhe pleaſed with her eyes?—But what did ſhe *mean* by this?

In

In my conſcience, my Harriet, little or much, I believe we women are all rogues in our hearts.

And does Miſs Grandiſon ſay that from her own conſcience?

I believe I do: But I muſt fly: I have ten more viſits to pay before I go home to dreſs. You will tell me all about your fellows, you ſay?

And you will tell me, about your *entanglement*, as you called it.

Why that's a difficulty upon me: But you muſt encourage me by your freedom, and we will take up our wretches, and lay them down again, one by one, as we run them over, and bid them lie ſtill and be quiet till we recal them to our memory.

But I have not one Lover, my Charlotte, to tell *you* of: I always gave them their diſmiſſion—

And I have but two, that at preſent I care to own; and they *won't* be diſmiſſed: But then I have half a dozen, I believe, that have ſaid extravagant things to me; and we muſt look upon them as Lovers elect, you know, who only want to be coquetted with.

Miſs Grandiſon, I hope, cannot think of coquetting?

Not much: Only a little now-and-then, to pay the men in their own coin.

Charming vivacity! ſaid I. I ſhall be undone, if you don't love me.

No fear, no fear of that!—I am a whimſical creature: But the ſun is not more conſtant in his courſe than I am ſteady in my friendſhips. And theſe communications on both ſides will rivet us to each other, if you treat me not with reſerve.

She aroſe to go in a hurry. Abate, my dear Charlotte, of half your other viſits, and favour me with your company a little longer.

Give me ſome chocolate then; and let me ſee your Couſin Reeves's: I like them. Of the ten viſits, ſix of the Ladies will be gone to ſales, or to plague tradeſmen

and buy nothing: Any-where rather than at home: The devil's at home, is a phraſe: And our modern Ladies live as if they thought ſo. Two of the other four called upon me, and hardly alighted: I ſhall do ſo by them. The other two I ſhall have paid my compliments to in one quarter of an hour.

I rang for chocolate; and to beg my Couſins company.

They wanted but the word: In they came. My apartment (which ſhe was pleaſed to admire) then became the ſubject of a few moments' converſation: And then a much better took place: Sir Charles, I mean.

I aſked, If her Brother had any relations at Canterbury?

I proteſt I don't know, ſaid ſhe: But *this* I know, That I have none there. Did I not hint to you, that Sir Charles has his ſecrets?—But he ſometimes loves to play with my curioſity: He knows I have a reaſonable quantity of that.

Were I his Siſter—

Then you muſt do as he would have you, Harriet. I know him to be ſteady in his purpoſes: But he is beſides ſo good, that I give up any-thing to oblige him—

Your *entanglement*, Charlotte? aſked I, ſmiling. Mr. Reeves knows nothing from that word.

Why, yes, my *entanglement*; and yet I hate to think of it: So no more of that. It is the only ſecret I have kept from him; and that is, becauſe he has no ſuſpicion of the matter: If he had, tho' my life were to be the forfeit, I believe he would have it.

She told us, that ſhe expected us ſoon to dine with her in St. James's Square: But that ſhe muſt fix Sir Charles. I hope, ſaid ſhe, you will often drop in upon me; as I will upon you. From this time, we will have nothing but converſation-viſits between us; and we will leave the modern world to themſelves; and be Queen Elizabeth's women. I am ſorry to tell you—Let me whiſper it—

And

And ſhe did; but loud enough for every one to hear: Altho' I follow the faſhion, and make one fool the more for it, I deſpiſe above one half of the women I know.

Miſs Grandiſon, affectedly whiſpered I again, ſhould *not* do ſo; becauſe her example is of weight enough to mend them.

I'll be hanged if Miſs Byron thinks ſo, re-whiſpered ſhe. The age is too far gone. Nothing but a national calamity can do it. But let me tell you, that, at the ſame time, I deſpiſe *more* than one half of the men. But, ſpeaking out, you and I will try to think ourſelves wiſer than any-body elſe; and we ſhall have this comfort, we ſhall not eaſily find any of our Sex, who by their ſuperior wiſdom will give us reaſon to think ourſelves miſtaken.

But adieu, adieu, and adieu, my agreeable friends: Let me ſee you, and you, and you, turning to each of the three, as often as is convenient, without ceremony: And remember we have been acquainted theſe hundred years.

Away ſhe hurried, forbidding me to go out of my apartment. Mrs. Reeves could not overtake her. Mr. Reeves had much ado to be in time to make his compliment. She was in her chariot before he could offer his hand.

How pretty it was, my Lucy, in Miſs Grandiſon, to remember the names of all my dear Friends! She told me indeed, on Sunday, that ſhe ſhould.

If travelling into foreign countries gives eaſe and politeneſs, would not one think that Miſs Grandiſon has viſited every European court, as well as her Brother? If ſhe has not, was it *neceſſary* for Sir Charles to go abroad to acquire that freedom and caſe which his ſiſter has ſo happily attained without ſtirring out of the kingdom.

Theſe men had not beſt deſpiſe us, Lucy. There is not, I hope, ſo much difference in the genius of

the two Sexes as the proud ones among theirs are apt to imagine; eſpecially when you draw compariſons from equal degrees in both.

O Mr. Walden, take care of yourſelf, if ever again you and I meet at Lady Betty's!—But this abominable Sir Hargrave! Not one word more of meeting at Lady Betty's! There ſaw I firſt the wretch that ſtill, on recollection, ſtrikes terror into my heart.

Wedneſday, a viſit from Miſs Clements and Lady Betty took me off my writing about two hours; yet I over-writ myſelf, and was obliged to lie down for about two more. At night we had Sir John Alleſtree, and his nephew, and Miſs Alleſtree, and Miſs Clements, and Lady Betty, at ſupper, and cards. But my ſtomach paining me, about eleven I was permitted to retire to bed.

On *Thurſday* I finiſhed my Letters, relating my diſtreſſes, and deliverance. It was a dreadful ſubject. I rejoiced when I had concluded it.

The ſame day Mr. Reeves received Sir Charles's Letter, incloſing that of the wretched Wilſon. I have often heard my Grandfather obſerve, that men of truly great and brave ſpirits are moſt tender and merciful; and that, on the contrary, men of baſe and low minds are cruel, tyrannical, inſolent, where-ever they have power. What this ſhort letter, ſo full of lenity, of mercy, of generous and humane care for the future good of a criminal, and extended to unborn families, as well as to all his acquaintance and friends in being, enables one to judge of the truly heroic Sir Charles Grandiſon; and what I have experienced of the low, grovelling, unmanly inſults of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen (I a poor defenceleſs ſilly girl, tricked into his power); are flagrant proofs of the juſtice of the obſervation.

I with with all my heart, that the beſt woman in the world were queen of a great nation: and that it were in my power, for the ſake of enlarging Sir Charles's ability to do good, to make him her conſort: Then

Then am I morally ſure, that I ſhould be the humble means of making a whole people happy!

But as we had all been informed from other hands, of Sir Hargrave's threatnings of Sir Charles's life, Wilſon's poſtſcript has faſtened a weight on my heart, that will not be removed till the danger is overblown.

This day I had Miſs Grandiſon's compliments, with tender enquiries, brought me; and a deſire, that as ſhe ſuppoſed my firſt viſit would be one of thankful duty, meaning to church (for ſo I had told her it ſhould) my next might be to her.

Yeſterday I received the welcome packet from ſo many kind friends: And I proſecuted with the more vigour, for it, my writing-taſk. How eaſily do we glide into ſubjects that pleaſe us!—How ſwiftly flies the pen!—The characters of Sir Charles and of Miſs Grandiſon were the ſubjects; and I was amazed to find how much I had written in ſo ſhort a time.

Miſs Grandiſon ſent me in the evening of this day her compliments joined with thoſe of her Brother, who was but juſt returned from Canterbury.

I wonder what Sir Charles could do at Canterbury ſo many days, and to have nobody there whom his Siſter knows.

She would have made me a viſit, ſhe ſent me word; but that as ſhe expected her Brother in the morning, ſhe had intended to have brought him with her. She added, that this morning (*Saturday*) they ſhould both ſet out for Colnebrook, in hopes of the Earl and Counteſs of L. arriving there as this night from *Scotland*.

Do you think, Lucy, it would not have been generous in Sir Charles to have made *one* viſit, before he ſet out for ſo many days, to *that* Canterbury, to the creature on whom he had laid ſuch an obligation? I can only mean as to the *civility* of the thing, you muſt think; ſince he was ſo good as to join in, nay, to propoſe, the further intimacy, as a Brother, and friend, and ſo-forth.—I wiſh that Sir Charles be as ſincere in

his profeſſions as his Siſter. He may in his travels (poſſibly he may) have miſtaken ſome gay weeds for fine flowers, and picked them up, and brought them with him to England: And yet, if he has done ſo, he will, even then, be ſuperior to thouſands, who travel, and bring home nothing but the weeds of foreign climates.

He once ſaid, as Miſs Grandiſon told me, that the Counteſs of L. is ſtill a more excellent woman than my Charlotte. Ah! Sir Charles! You can tell fibs, I believe. I will not forgive in you, thoſe ſlighter deviations, which we are too apt to paſs by in other, even tolerable, men.

I wiſh you may be in earneſt, my good Sir, in propoſing to cultivate an intimate friendſhip with me, as that of a Brother to a Siſter [Shake your head, my Lucy, if you will, I mean no more] that I may be intitled to tell you your faults, as I ſee them. In your ſiſter *Harriet* you ſhall find, tho' a reſpectful, yet an open-eyed monitor. Our Charlotte thinks you cannot be wrong in any-thing.

All I fear is, that Sir Charles's tenderneſs was deſigned to be excited only while my ſpirits were weak. Yet he beſpoke a brotherly relation to me, before Mr. Reeves, when he brought me home, and ſuppoſed me ſtolen from his family in my infancy. That was going farther than was neceſſary, if he thought to drop the fraternal character ſoon.

But might not my own behaviour alarm him? The kind, the conſiderate man, is perhaps compaſſionate in his intention. Not diſtinguiſhing aright my baſhful gratitude, and down-caſt eye, he might be afraid, leſt I ſhould add one to the half-ſcore, that his Siſter ſays will die if he marry.

If this be ſo, what, my dear, will your Harriet deſerve, if *his* caution does not teach *her* ſome?

After all, I believe, theſe men in general think our hearts are made of ſtrange combuſtible materials. A

ſpark

ſpark ſtruck, a match thrown in —But the beſt of men, this admirable man, will, I hope, find himſelf miſtaken, if he think ſo of your Harriet.

What ails me, that I am grown ſuch a boaſter! Surely, this horrid attempt of Sir Hargrave has not affected my brain. Methinks I am not, ſome how or other, as I uſed to be in my head, or heart, I know not which.

Do you, Lucy, bring me back again, by your reminding love, if you think there is any alteration in your Harriet, for the worſe: And the rather, as it may prevent my Uncle—

But what makes me ſo much more afraid of my Uncle, than I uſed to be?—Yet men in their raillery, [Don't, however, read this paragaph to him] are ſo—I don't know how—ſo *un*-tender—But let me fall into the hands of my indulgent Grandmamma, and Aunt Selby, and into your gentle hands, and all will be as it ſhould be.

But what was my ſubject, before this laſt ſeized, and ran away with, my pen? I did not uſe to wander thus, when I had a beaten path before me. O this vile, vile Sir Hargrave! If I have a fault in my head that did not uſe to be there, it is entirely owing to him. I am ſure my heart is not wrong.

But I can write nothing now but of Miſs Grandiſon and her Brother. What entirely new ſcenes are opened to me by my diſtreſs?—May I have cauſe, as Sir Charles wiſhed, to reap good from the evil!

I will endeavour to bring Miſs Clements into an acquaintance with theſe worthies; that is to ſay, if I have myſelf the intereſt to preſerve my footing in their favour.

Lady Betty reſolves to recommend *herſelf*. She *will* be acquainted with them, ſhe ſays, whether they will or not. And yet I could not bear for Lady Betty that ſhe ſhould be ſlighted by thoſe whom ſhe dotes upon. That, ſurely, is one of the heavieſt of evils.

And yet *ſelf-love*, where it is evidently inherent, will enable one to get over it, I believe, pretty ſoon; tho' nothing but *that* and *pride* can, in *ſuch*. Of ſome uſe therefore, you'll be apt to ſay, are pride and ſelf-love. Why, yes, and ſo they are, where they are a part of a perſon's habit. But, O my Lucy, will not a *native* humility render this pride, whoſe genuine offspring are reſentment and ill-will, abſolutely unneceſſary, and procure for us, unmingled with mortification, the eſteem we wiſh for in the hearts of the worthy?

As to the the reſt of my new acquaintance in town, who, till I knew this admirable Siſter and Brother, took up ſo much of my paper, tho' ſome of them are doubtleſs very worthy; Adieu—That is to ſay, as *choſen* ſubjects—Adieu! ſays

Your HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Saturday Night.

LORD have mercy upon me, my dear!—What ſhall I do?—The vile Sir Hargrave has ſent a challenge to Sir Charles!—What may be the event—O that I had not come to London!—This is a copy of the Letter, that communicates it. It is from that Bagenhall. But this is the copy of the Letter—I will endeavour to tranſcribe it—But, no, I cannot—My Sally ſhall write it over. Lord bleſs me! What ſhall I do?

To Miſs BYRON.

Madam, *Cavendiſh-Square, Feb.* 25.

YOU might eaſily believe, that the affair betwixt Sir Hargrave Pollexſen and Sir Charles Grandiſon could not, after ſo violent an inſult as the former received from the latter, end without conſequences.

By all that's ſacred, Sir Hargrave knows not that I write.

There is but one way that I can think of to prevent bloodſhed; and that, madam, ſeems to be in your own power.

Sir Hargrave inſiſts upon it, that he meant you nothing but honour. You know the uſe or abuſe of the power he had obtained over you. If he behaved with indecency, he tells me not the truth.

To make a young Lady, whatever were her merit, the wife of a man of near 10,000*l.* a year, and who had declared herſelf abſolutely diſengaged in her affections, was not doing diſhonour to her, ſo much as to himſelf, in the violent meaſures his Love obliged him to take to make her ſo.

Now, madam, as Sir Charles Grandiſon was utterly a ſtranger to you; as Sir Hargrave intended ſo honourably by you; and as you are not engaged in your affections; if you will conſent to be Lady Pollexſen; and if Sir Charles Grandiſon will aſk pardon for his unprovoked knight-errantry; I will not be Sir Hargrave's ſecond in the affair, if he refuſe to accept of ſuch ſatisfaction in full for the violence he ſuſtained.

I ſolemnly repeat, that Sir Hargrave knows nothing of my writing to you. You may (but I inſiſt upon it, as in confidence to every-body elſe) conſult your Couſin Reeves on the ſubject. Your honour given, that you will in a month's time be Sir Hargrave's, will make me exert all my power with him (and I have reaſon to think that is not ſmall) to induce him to compromiſe on thoſe terms.

I went to Sir Charles's houſe yeſterday afternoon, with a Letter from Sir Hargrave. Sir Charles was juſt ſtepping into his chariot to his Siſter. He opened it; and, with a civility that became his character, told me he was juſt going with his Siſter to Colnebrook, to meet dear friends on their return from Scotland: That he ſhould return on Monday; that the pleaſure he

ſhould

ſhould have with his long-abſent friends, would not permit him to think of the contents till then: But that the writer ſhould not fail of ſuch an anſwer as a gentleman ought to give.

Now, madam, I was ſo much charmed with Sir Charles Grandiſon's fine perſon and politeneſs, and his character is ſo extraordinary, that I thought this interval between this night and Monday morning a happy one. And I took it into my head to make the above propoſal to you; and I hope you will think it behoves *you*, as much as it does *me*, to prevent the fatal miſchief that may otherwiſe happen to men of their conſideration.

I have not the honour of being perſonally known to you, madam; but my character is too generally eſtabliſhed for any one to impute to me any other motives for this my application to you, than thoſe above given. A line left for me at Sir Hargrave's, in Cavendiſh-Square, will come to the hands of, madam,

Your moſt obedient humble Servant,

JAMES BAGENHALL.

O MY dear! What a Letter!—Mr. Reeves's, Mrs. Reeves, are grieved to the heart. Mr. Reeves ſays, that if Sir Hargrave inſiſts upon it, Sir Charles is obliged, in honour, to meet him—Murderous, vile word *honour!* What, at this rate, is honour! The very oppoſite to duty, goodneſs, piety, religion; and to every-thing that is or ought to be ſacred among men.

How ſhall I look Miſs Grandiſon in the face? Miſs Grandiſon will hate me! To be again the occaſion of endangering the life of ſuch a Brother!

But, what do you think?—Lady Betty is of opinion—Mr. Reeves has conſulted Lady Betty Williams, in confidence—Lady Betty ſays, that if the matter *can* be prevented—Lord bleſs me! ſhe ſays, I *ought* to prevent it!—What! by becoming the wife of ſuch a man

man as Sir Hargrave! ſo unmanly, ſo malicious, ſo low a wretch!—What does Lady Betty mean?—Yet were it in my power to ſave the life of Sir Charles Grandiſon, and I refuſed to do it; for ſelfiſh reaſons refuſed; for the ſake of my worldly happineſs; when there are thouſands of good wives, who are miſerable with bad huſbands—But will not the ſacrifice of *my* life be accepted by this ſanguinary man! That, with all my heart, would I make no ſcruple to lay down. If the wretch will plunge a dagger in my boſom, and take that for ſatisfaction, I will not heſitate one moment.

But my Couſin ſaid, that he was of opinion, that Sir Charles would hardly be brought to aſk pardon. How can I doubt, ſaid I, that the vile man, if he may be induced by this Bagenhall to compromiſe on my being his wife, will diſpenſe with that punctilio, and wreak on me, were I to be his unhappy property, his whole unmanly vengeance? Is he not ſpiteful, mean, malicious?—But, abhorred be the thought of my yielding to be the wife of ſuch a man!—Yet, what is the alternative? Were I to die, that wretched alternative would ſtill take place: His malice to the beſt of men would rather be whetted than blunted, by my irrevocable deſtiny? O my Lucy! violent as my grief was, dreadful as my apprehenſions were, and unmanly as the treatment I met with from the baſe man, I never was deſtreſſed till now!

But ſhould Miſs Grandiſon adviſe, ſhould ſhe *inſiſt* upon my compliance with the abhorred condition (and has ſhe not a right to inſiſt upon it, for the ſake of the ſafety of her innocent Brother?) can I *then* refuſe my compliance with it?—Are we not taught, that this world is a ſtate of trial, and of mortification? And is not calamity neceſſary to wean our vain hearts from it? And if my motive be a motive of juſtice and gratitude, and to ſave a life much more valuable to the world than my own; and which, but for me,

had not been in danger—Ought I—And yet—Ah! my Lucy, what can I ſay?—How unhappy! that I cannot conſult this dear Lady, who has ſuch an intereſt in a life ſo precious, as I might have done, had ſhe been in town?

O Lucy! What an anſwer, as this unwelcome, this wicked mediator gives it, was that which the excellent man returned to the delivered challenge—"I "am going to meet dear friends on their return from "Scotland!" What a meeting of joy will be here ſaddened over, if they know of this ſhocking challenge? And how can his noble heart overflow with pleaſure on this joyful occaſion, as it would otherwiſe have done, with ſuch an important event in ſuſpenſe, that may make it the laſt meeting which this affectionate and moſt worthy of families will ever know! How near may be the life of this dear Brother to a period, when he congratulates the ſafe arrival of his Brother and Siſter! And who can bear to think of ſeeing, ere one week is over paſt, the now rejoicing and harmonious family, clad in mourning for the firſt of Brothers, and firſt of men? And I, my Lucy, I, the wretched Harriet Byron, to be the cauſe of all!

And could the true hero ſay, "That the pleaſure he "ſhould have on meeting his long-abſent friends would "not permit him to think of the contents of ſuch a "Letter, till Monday; but that then the writer ſhould "not fail of ſuch an anſwer—as a gentleman ought "to give?"—O my dear Sir Charles! [on this occaſion he is, and ought to be, very dear to me] How I dread the anſwer which vile cuſtom, and falſe honour, will oblige you, as a gentleman, to give! And is there no way with honour to avoid giving ſuch an anſwer, as diſtracts me to be told (as Mr. Reeves tells me) *muſt* be given, if I, your Harriet, interpoſe not, to the ſacrifice of all my happineſs in this life?

But Mr. Reeves aſks, May not this Bagenhall, tho' he ſays Sir Hargrave knows nothing of his writing, have

have written in concert with him?—What if he has, does not the condition remain? And will not the reſentment, on the refuſal take place?—And is not the challenge delivered into Sir Charles's hands? And has he not declared, that he will ſend an anſwer to it on Monday? This is carrying the matter beyond contrivance or ſtratagem. Sir Charles, ſo challenged, will not let the challenger come off ſo *eaſily*. He cannot, in real honour, now, make propoſals for qualifying; or accept of them, if made to him. And is not Monday the next day but one?—Only *that* day between, for which I have been preparing my grateful heart to return my ſilent praiſes to the Almighty, in the place dedicated to his honour, for ſo ſignal a deliverance! And now is my ſafety to be owing, as it may happen, to a much better perſon's deſtruction!

I WAS obliged to lay down my pen.—See how the bliſtered paper—It is too late to ſend away this Letter: If it were not, it would be barbarous to torment you with it, while the dreadful ſuſpenſe holds.

Sunday Morning.

I AM unable to write on in the manner I uſed to do. Not a moment all the night paſt did I cloſe my eyes: How they are ſwelled with weeping! I am preparing, however, to go to church: There will I renew my fervent prayers, that my grateful thankſgiving for the paſt deliverance may be bleſſed to me in the future event!

Mr. Reeves thinks, that no ſtep ought to be, or can be taken in this ſhocking affair, till Sir Charles returns, or Miſs Grandiſon can be conſulted. He has taken meaſures to know every motion of the vile Sir Hargrave.

Lord bleſs me, my dear! the man has loſt three of his fore teeth! A man ſo vain of his perſon! O how muſt he be exaſperated!

Mr.

Mr. Reeves alſo will be informed of Sir Charles's arrival the moment he comes to town. He has private information, that the furious Sir Hargrave has with him a man ſkilled in the ſcience of offence, with whom he is practiſing—O my dear, how this diſtracts me!

For Mr. Reeves or me to anſwer this Bagenhall, Mr. Reeves ſays, is not to be thought of, as he is a wicked man, and was not likely to have written the alarming Letter from good principles. I once indeed propoſed to write—I knew not what to do, what to propoſe—Can you write, ſaid Mr. Reeves, and promiſe or give hope to Sir Hargrave?

O no, no! anſwered I.

If you could, it is my opinion, that Sir Charles and his Siſter would both deſpiſe you, however ſelf-denying and laudable your motive might be.

LETTER XXXIX.

Miſs BYRON. *In continuation.*

Monday Morning, Feb. 27.

WHAT a dreadful day was yeſterday to me; and what a ſtill worſe night had I, if poſſible, than the former? My prayers, I doubt, cannot be heard, ſince they have not that affiance with them that they uſed to be attended with. How happy was I before I came to London! I cannot write: I cannot do anything. Mr. Reeves is juſt informed, that Sir Charles and Lord L. and the two Siſters, arrived in town late laſt night. O my Lucy, to return ſuch an anſwer, I doubt, as Sir Charles thinks a gentleman ought to ſend. Good heaven! how will this end?

Eight o'clock.

I HAVE received this moment the following billet.

My dear Harriet.

PREPARE yourſelf for a new admirer: My Siſter L. and I, are reſolved to breakfaſt with you, unleſs you forbid us by the bearer. If we find you to have

have made an attempt to alter your uſual morning appearance, we ſhall ſuſpect you of a deſire to triumph over us in the conſciouſneſs of your ſuperior graces. It is a ſudden reſolution. You ſhould have had otherwiſe notice laſt night; and yet it was late before we came to town. —Have you been good? Are you quite recovered? But in half an hour I hope to aſk you an hundred thouſand queſtions.

Compliments to our Couſins.

CH. GR.

HERE is a ſweet ſprightly billet. Miſs Grandiſon cannot know, the Counteſs cannot know, any-thing of the dreadful affair, that has given to my countenance, and I am ſure will continue on it, an appearance, that, did I not always dreſs when I aroſe for the morning, would make me regardleſs of *that* Miſs Grandiſon hints at.

What joy, at another time, would the honour of this viſit have given us! But even now, we have a melancholy pleaſure in it: Juſt ſuch a one, as the ſorrowing friends of the deſparate ſick, experience, on the coming-in of a long-expected phyſician, altho' they are in a manner hopeleſs of his ſucceſs. But a coach ſtops—

I ran to the dining-room window. O my dear! It is a coach! but only the two ladies! Good God!—Sir Charles at this moment, at this moment, my boding heart tells me—

Twelve o'clock

MY heart is a little lighter: Yet not unapprehenſive — Take my narrative in courſe, as I ſhall endeavour to give you the particulars of every-thing that paſſed in the laſt more than agreeable three hours.

I had juſt got down into the great parlour, before the Ladies entered. Mr. Reeves waited on them at their coach. He handed in the Counteſs. Miſs Grandiſon in a charming humour entered with them.

There,

There, Lady L. firſt know our Couſin Reeves, ſaid ſhe—

The Counteſs, after ſaluting Mrs. Reeves, turned to me—There, Lady L. ſaid Miſs Grandiſon, That's the girl! That's our Harriet! [Her Ladyſhip ſaluted me] But how now! ſaid Miſs Grandiſon, looking earneſtly in my face. How now, Harriet! —Excuſe me, Lady L. (taking my hand) I muſt reckon with this girl; leading me to the window—How now, Harriet! —Thoſe eyes! —Mr. Reeves, Couſin, Mrs. Reeves! What's to do here!

Lively and ever-amiable Miſs Grandiſon, thought I, how will, by-and-by, all this ſweet Sun-ſhine in your countenance be ſhut in!

Come, come, I *will* know, proceeded ſhe, makeing me ſit down, and taking my hand as ſhe ſat by me; I *will* know the whole of the matter. —That's my dear, for I try'd to ſmile—An April eye—Would to heaven the month was come which my Harriet's eye anticipates.

I ſighed. Well, but why that heavy ſigh, ſaid ſhe?—Our Grandmother Shirley—

I hope, madam, is very well.

Our Aunt Selby? Our Uncle Selby? Our Lucy?

All well I hope.

What a deuce ails the girl then? Take care I don't have cauſe to beat you? —Have any of your fellows hanged themſelves?—And are you concerned they did not ſooner find the rope?—But come, we will know all by-and-by.

Charlotte, ſaid Lady L. approaching me [I ſtood up] you oppreſs our new Siſter: I wiſh, my dear, you would borrow a few of our younger Siſter's bluſhes. Let me take you out of this lively girl's hands: I have much ado to keep her down, tho' I am her elder Siſter. Nobody but my Brother can manage her.

Miſs Grandiſon, madam, is all goodneſs.

We

We have been all diſturbed, ſaid Mrs. Reeves [I was glad to be helped out] in the fear that Sir Hargrave Pollexfen—

O madam! He dare not; he will not:—He'll be glad to be quiet, if you'll let him, ſaid the Counteſs.

It was plain they knew nothing of the challenge.

You have not heard any-thing particular, aſked Miſs Grandiſon, of Sir Hargrave?

I hope your *Brother*, madam, has not, anſwered I.

Not a word, I dare ſay.

You muſt believe, Ladies, ſaid I, that I muſt be greatly affected, were any-thing likely to happen to my deliverer; as I ſhould have been the unhappy cauſe. Such a family harmony to be interrupted—

Come, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon, this is very good of you: This is like a Siſter: But I hope my Brother will be here by-and-by.

And Lord L. added the obliging Counteſs, wants to ſee you, my dear. Come, Miſs Byron, if Charlotte is naught, he will make a party againſt her; and ſhe ſhall be but my ſecond-beſt Siſter. I hope, my Lord and Sir Charles will come together, if they can but ſhake off wicked Everard, as we call a kinſman, whom Sir Charles has no mind to introduce to you, without your leave.

But we'll not ſtay breakfaſt for them, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon: They were not certain: and *deſired* we would not.—Come, come, get us ſome breakfaſt; Lady L. has been up before her hour; and I have told you, Harriet, that I am an early riſer. I don't chooſe to eat my gloves.—But I muſt do ſomething to divert my hunger: And ſtepping to the harpſichord, ſhe touched the keys in ſuch a manner, as ſhewed ſhe could make them ſpeak what language ſhe pleaſed.

I attended to her charming finger: So did every one. But breakfaſt coming in—No but I won't, ſaid ſhe, anticipating our requeſts; and continuing the air by her voice, ran to the table; Hang ceremony, ſaid ſhe, ſitting

ſitting down firſt; let ſlower ſouls compliment: And taking ſome muffin, I'll have breakfaſted before theſe *Pray madams*, and *Pray my dears*, are ſeated.

Mad girl! Lady L. called her. Theſe, Mrs. Reeves, are always her airs with us: But I thought ſhe would have been reſtrained by the example of her Siſter Harriet. We have utterly ſpoiled the girl by our fond indulgence. But, Charlotte, is a good heart to be *every where* pleaded for a whimſical head?

Who ſees not the elder Siſter in that Speech? replied Miſs Grandiſon: But I am the moſt generous creature breathing; yet nobody finds it out. For why do I aſſume theſe ſilly airs, but to make *you*, Lady L. ſhine at my expence?

Still, Lucy, the contents of that Bagenhall's Letter hung heavy at my heart. But I could not be ſure but Sir Charles had his reaſons for concealing the matter from his Siſters, I knew not how to enter directly into the ſubject: But, thought I, cannot I fiſh ſomething out for the quiet of my own heart; and leave to Sir Charles's diſcretion, the manner of his revealing the matter to his Siſters, or otherwiſe?

Did your Ladyſhip, ſaid I to Lady L. arrive on Saturday [I knew not how to begin] at the hoſpitable houſe at Colnebrook, my aſylum?

I did: And ſhall have a greater value for that houſe than ever I had before, for its having afforded a ſhelter to ſo valued a lady.

You have been told, Ladies, I ſuppoſe, of that Wilſon's Letter to Sir Charles?

We have: And rejoice to find that ſo deep a plot was ſo happily fruſtrated.

His poſtſcript gives me concern.

What were the contents of it?

That Sir Hargrave breathed nothing but revenge.

Sir Charles told us nothing of that: but it is not unlikely that a man ſo greatly diſappointed ſhould rave and threaten. I am told that he is ſtill, either by ſhame, or illneſs, confined to his chamber. At

At that moment, a chariot ſtopt at the door: And inſtantly, It is Lord L. and Sir Charles with him, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon.

I dared not to truſt myſelf with my joy. I hurried out at one of the doors, as if I had forgot ſomething, as they entered at the other. I ruſhed into the back parlour—Thank God! Thank God! ſaid I—My Gratitude was too ſtrong for my heart: I thought I ſhould have fainted.

Do you wonder, Lucy, at my being ſo much affected, when I had been in ſuch a dreadful ſuſpenſe, and had formed ſuch terrible ideas of the danger of one of the beſt of men, all owing to his ſerving and ſaveing me?

Surprizes from joy, I fanſy, and where gratitude is the principal ſpring, are ſooner recovered from than ſurprizes which raiſe the more ſtormy paſſions. Mrs. Reeves came in to me: My dear! Your withdrawing will be noticed. I was juſt coming in, ſaid I: And ſo I was. I went in.

Sir Charles bowed low to me: So did my Lord. ermit me, madam, ſaid Sir Charles, to preſent Lord L. to you: He is our Brother—Our late-found Siſter Harriet, my Lord.

Sir Charles, ſaid Miſs Grandiſon, Miſs Byron, and Mr. and Mrs. Reeves, have been tormenting themſelves about a poſtſcript to that footman's Letter. You told not us of that poſtſcript.

Who minds poſtſcripts, Charlotte? Except indeed to a Lady's Letter. One word with you, good Miſs Byron; taking my hand, and leading me to the window.

How the fool coloured! I could feel my face glow.

O Lucy! What a conſciouſneſs of inferiority fills a mind not ungenerous, when it labours under the ſenſe of obligations it cannot return!

My Siſter Charlotte, madam, was impatient to preſent to you her beloved Siſter. Lady L. was as impatient to

attend you. My Lord L. was equally deſirous to claim the honour of your acquaintance. They inſiſted upon my introducing my Lord. I thought it was too precipitate a viſit, and might hurt your delicacy, and make Charlotte and me appear, as if we had been oſtentatiouſly boaſting of the opportunities that had been thrown into our hands, to do a very common ſervice. I think I ſee that you are hurt. Forgive me, madam, I will follow my own judgment another time, Only be aſſured of this, that your merits, and not the ſervice, have drawn this viſit upon you.

I could not be diſpleaſed at this polite addreſs, as it helped me to an excuſe for behaving ſo like a fool, as he might think, ſince he knew not the cauſe.

You are very obliging, Sir. My Lord and Lady L. do me great honour. Miſs Grandiſon cannot do anything but what is agreeable to me. In ſuch company, I am but a common perſon: But my gratitude will never let me look upon your ſeaſonable protection as a common ſervice. I am only anxious for the conſequences to yourſelf. I ſhould have no pretence to the gratitude I ſpeak of, if I did not own, that the reported threatnings, and what Wilſon writes by way of poſtſcript, have given me diſturbance, leſt your ſafety ſhould, on my account, be brought into hazard.

Miſs Byron ſpeaks like herſelf: But whatever were to be the conſequences, can you think, madam, that a man of any ſpirit could have acted otherwiſe than I did? Would I not have been glad, that any man would have done juſt the ſame thing, in favour of my Siſter Charlotte? Could I behave with greater moderation? I am pleaſed with myſelf on looking back; and that I am not always: There ſhall be no conſequences follow, that I am not forced upon in my own neceſſary defence.

We ſpoke loud enough to be heard: And Miſs Grandiſon, joining us, ſaid, But pray, Brother, tell us,

if

if there be grounds to apprehend any-thing from what the footman writes?

You cannot imagine but Sir Hargrave would bluſter and threaten: To loſe ſuch a prize, ſo near as he thought himſelf to carrying his point, muſt affect a man of his caſt: But are Ladies to be troubled with *words?* Men of true courage do not threaten.

Shall I beg one word with you, Sir Charles? ſaid Mr. Reeves.

They withdrew to the back parlour; and there Mr. Reeves, who had the Letter of that Bagenhall, ſhewed it to him.

He read it—A very extraordinary Letter! ſaid he; and gave it back to him—But pray, what ſays Miſs Byron to it?—Is *ſhe* willing to take this ſtep in conſideration of my ſafety?

You may believe, Sir Charles, ſhe is greatly diſtreſſed.

As a tender-hearted woman, and as one who thinks already much too highly of what was done, ſhe *may* be diſtreſſed: But does ſhe heſitate a moment upon the part ſhe ought to take? Does ſhe not deſpiſe the writer and the writing?—I thought Miſs Byron—

He ſtopt, it ſeems, and ſpoke and looked warm; the firſt time, ſaid Mr. Reeves, that I thought Sir Charles, on occaſion, paſſionate.

I wiſh, Lucy, that he had not ſtopt. I wiſh he had ſaid what he thought Miſs Byron. I own to you, that it would go to my heart, if I knew that Sir Charles Grandiſon thought me a mean creature.

You muſt think, Sir Charles, that Miſs Byron—

Pray, Mr. Reeves, forgive me for interrupting you; What ſteps have been taken upon this Letter?

None, Sir.

It has *not* been honoured with notice; not with the *leaſt* notice?

It has not.

And could it it be ſuppoſed by theſe mean men (All

men are mean, Mr. Reeves, who can be *premeditatedly* guilty of a baſeneſs) that I would be brought to aſk pardon for my part in this affair? No man, Mr. Reeves, would be more ready than myſelf to aſk pardon, even of my inferior, had I done a wrong thing: But never ſhould a *Prince* make me ſtoop to diſavow a right one.

But, Sir Charles, let me aſk you, Has Sir Hargrave challenged you? Did this Bagenhall bring you a Letter?

Sir Hargrave has: Bagenhall did: But what of that, Mr. Reeves? I promiſed an anſwer on Monday. I would not ſo much as think of ſetting pen to paper on ſuch an account, to interrupt for a moment the happineſs I had hoped to receive in the meeting of a Siſter and her Lord, ſo dear to me: An anſwer I have accordingly ſent him this day.

You *have* ſent him an anſwer, Sir!—I am in great apprehenſions—

You have no reaſon, Mr. Reeves, I do aſſure you. But let not my Siſters, nor Lord L. know of this matter. Why ſhould I, who cannot have a moment's uneaſineſs upon it, for *my own* ſake, have the needleſs fears and apprehenſions of perſons to whom I wiſh to give nothing but pleaſure, to contend with? An imaginary diſtreſs, to thoſe who think it more than imaginary, is a real one: And I cannot bear to ſee my friends unhappy.

Have you accepted, Sir—Have you—

I have been too much engaged, Mr. Reeves, in ſuch cauſes as this: I never drew my ſword but in my own defence, and when no other means could defend me. I never could bear a deſigned inſult. I am naturally paſſionate. You know not the pains it has coſt me, to keep my paſſion under: But I have ſuffered too much in my after-regret, when I have been hurried away by it, not to endeavour to reſtrain its firſt ſallies.

I hope, Sir, you will not meet—

I will

I will not meet any man, Mr. Reeves, as a duelliſt: I am not ſo much a coward, as to be afraid of being branded for one. I hope my ſpirit is in general too well known for any one to inſult me on ſuch an imputation. Forgive the ſeeming vanity, Mr. Reeves: But I live not to the world: I live to myſelf; to the monitor within me.

Mr. Reeves applauded him with his hands and eyes; but could not in words. The *heart* ſpoke theſe laſt words, ſaid my good Couſin. How did his face ſeem to ſhine in my eyes!

There are many bad cuſtoms, Mr. Reeves, that I grieve for: But for none ſo much as this of premeditated duelling. Where is the magnanimity of the man that cannot get above the vulgar breath? How many fatherleſs, brotherleſs, ſonleſs families have mourned all their lives the unhappy reſort to this dreadful practice! A man who defies his fellow-creature into the field, in a private quarrel, muſt firſt defy his God; and what are his *hopes*, but to be a murderer; to do an irreparable injury to the innocent family and dependents of the murdered?—But ſince you have been let into the matter ſo far, by the unaccountable Letter you let me ſee, I will ſhew you Sir Hargrave's to me.—This is it, pulling it out of his pocket-book.

YOU did well, Sir Charles Grandiſon, to leave your name. My ſcoundrels were too far off their maſter to inform themſelves, who the perſon was that inſulted an innocent man (as to *him*, innocent, however) on the highway. You *expected* to hear from me, it is evident; and you ſhould have heard before now, had I been able from the effects of the unmanly ſurprize you took advantage of, to leave my chamber. I demand from you the ſatisfaction due to a gentleman. The time your own; provided it exceed not next Wedneſday; which will give you

opportunity, I ſuppoſe, to ſettle your affairs; but the ſooner the better. The place, if you have no objection, Kenſington Gravel-pits. I will bring piſtols for your choice; or you may for mine, which you will. The reſt may be left to my worthy friend Mr. Bagenhall, who is ſo kind as to carry you this, on my part; and to ſome one whom you ſhall pitch upon, on yours. Till when, I am

Saurday. *Your humble Servant,*
HARGRAVE POLLEXFEN.

I have a copy of my anſwer ſomewhere—Here it is. You will wonder, perhaps, Mr. Reeves, on ſuch a ſubject as this, to find it a long one. Had Sir Hargrave known me better than he does, ſix lines might have been ſufficient.

SIR,

MR. Bagenhall gave me yours on Saturday laſt, juſt as I was ſtepping into my chariot to go out of town. Neither the general contents, nor the time mentioned in it, made it neceſſary for me to alter my meaſures. My Siſter was already in the chariot. I had not done well to make a woman uneaſy. I have many friends; and I have great *pleaſure* in promoting *theirs*. I promiſed an anſwer on Monday.

My anſwer is this—I have ever refuſed (and the occaſion has happened too often) to draw my ſword upon a ſet and formal challenge. Yet I have reaſon to think, from the ſkill I pretend to have in the weapons, that in declining to do ſo, I conſult my conſcience rather than my ſafety.

Have you any friends, Sir Hargrave? Do they love you? Do you love them? Are you deſirous of life for their ſakes? for your own?—Have you enemies to whom your untimely end would give pleaſure?—Let theſe conſiderations weigh with you: They do, and always did, with me. I am cool: You cannot be ſo. The cool perſon, on ſuch an occaſion as this, ſhould

put

put the warm one on thinking: This however as you pleaſe.

But one more queſtion let me aſk you—If you think I have injured you, is it prudent to give me a chance, were it *but* a chance, to do you a ſtill greater injury?

You were engaged in an unlawful enterprize. If you would not have done by me in the ſame ſituation, what I did by you, you are not, let me tell you, Sir Hargrave, the man of honour, that a man of honour ſhould be ſolicitous to put upon a foot with himſelf.

I took not an unmanly advantage of you, Sir Hargrave: You drew upon me: I drew not in return. You had a diſadvantage in not quitting your chariot; after the lunge you made at me, you may be thankful that I made not uſe of it.

I ſhould not have been ſorry, had I been able to give the Lady the protection ſhe claimed, with leſs hurt to yourſelf: For I could have no malice in what I did: Altho' I had, and have ſtill, a juſt abhorrence of the violence you were guilty of to a helpleſs woman; and who I have found ſince merited better treatment from you; and indeed merits the beſt from all the world; and whoſe life was endangered by the violence.

I write a long Letter, becauſe I propoſe *only* to write. Pardon me for repeating, that the men who have acted as you and I have acted, as well with regard to the Lady, as to *each other*, cannot, were their principles ſuch as would permit them to meet, meet upon a foot.

Let any man inſult me upon my refuſal, and put me upon my defence, and he ſhall find that numbers to my ſingle arm ſhall not intimidate me. Yet, even in *that* caſe, I would much rather chooſe to clear myſelf of them as a man of honour ſhould with to do, than either to kill or maim any man. My life is not my own: Much leſs is another man's mine. Him who thinks differently from me, I can deſpiſe as heartily

as he can deſpiſe me. And if ſuch a one imagines, that he has a title to my life, let him take it: But it muſt be in my own way, not in his.

In a word, If any man as aught againſt me, and will not apply for redreſs to the Laws of his country, my goings out, and comings in, are always known; and I am any hour of the day to be found, or met with, where-ever I have a proper call. My ſword is a ſword of defence, not of offence. A piſtol I only carry on the road, to terrify robbers: And I have found a leſs dangerous weapon ſometimes ſufficient to repel a ſudden inſult. And now, if Sir Hargrave Pollexfen be wiſe, he will think himſelf obliged, for this not unfriendly expoſtulation, or whatever he pleaſes to call it, to

His moſt humble Servant,
CHARLES GRANDISON.

Monday.

MR. Reeves beſought Sir Charles to let him ſhew me theſe Letters. You may, Mr. Reeves, ſaid he; ſince I intend not to meet Sir Hargrave in the way he preſcribes.

As I aſked not leave, my Lucy, to take copies of them, I beg they may not be ſeen out of the venerable circle.

I know I need not ſay how much I am pleaſed with the contents of the latter: I doubt not but you all will be equally ſo: Yet, as Sir Charles himſelf expects not that Sir Hargrave will reſt the matter here; and indeed ſays he cannot, conſiſtently with the vulgar notions of honour; do you think I can be eaſy, as all this is to be placed to my account?

But it is evident, that Sir Charles *is*. He is governed by another ſet of principles, than thoſe of falſe honour; and ſhews, what his Siſter ſays to be true, that he regards firſt his duty, and then what is called honour. How does the knowlege of theſe his excellencies raiſe him in my mind! Indeed, Lucy, I ſeem ſometimes

times to feel, as if my gratitude had raiſed a throne for him in my heart; but yet as for a near friend, as a beloved Brother only. My reverence for him is too great—Aſſure yourſelf, my dear, that this reverence will always keep me right.

Sir Charles and Mr. Reeves returning into company, the converſation took a general turn. But, oppreſſed with obligations as I am, I could not be lively. My heart, as Miſs Grandiſon ſays, is, I believe, a proud one. And when I thought of what might ſtill happen (who knows, but from aſſaſſination, in reſentment of ſome very ſpirited ſtrokes in Sir Charles's Letter, as well as from the diſgrace the wretch muſt carry in his face to the grave?) I could not but look upon this fine man who ſeemed to poſſeſs his own ſoul in peace, ſometimes with concern, and even with tender grief, on ſuppoſing, that now, lively and happy as he ſeemed to be, and the joy of all his friends, he might poſſibly, and perhaps in a few hours—How can I put down my horrid thoughts!

At other times, indeed, I caſt an eye of ſome pleaſure on him (when he looked another way) on thinking him the only man on earth, to whom, in ſuch diſtreſs, I could have wiſhed to owe the obligations I am under to him. His modeſt merit, thought I, will not make one uneaſy: He thinks the protection afforded but a common protection. He is accuſtomed to do great and generous things. I might have been obliged to a man whoſe fortune might have made it convenient for him to hope ſuch advantages from the riſque he run for me, as prudence would have made objections to comply with, not a little embarraſſing to my gratitude.

But here, my heart is left free. And O, thought I, now-and-then, as I looked upon him, Sir Charles Grandiſon is a man with whom I would not *wiſh* to be in love. I, to have ſo many rivals! He, to be ſo much admired! Women not to ſtay till they are aſked,

as Miſs Grandiſon once ſaid; his heart muſt be proof againſt thoſe tender ſenſations, which grow into ardour, and glow, in the boſom of a man purſuing a *firſt* and *only* Love.

I warrant, my Lucy, if the truth were known, altho' Sir Charles has at Canterbury, or at one place or other, his half-ſcore Ladies, who would break their hearts if he were to marry, yet he knows not any *one* of them whom he loves better than another. And all but right! All but juſtice, if they will not ſtay till they are aſked!

Miſs Grandiſon invited Mr. and Mrs. Reeves, and me, to dinner, on Wedneſday, and for the reſt of the day and evening. It was a welcome invitation.

The Counteſs expreſſed herſelf pleaſed with me. Poor and ſpiritleſs as was the figure which I made in this whole viſit, her prepoſſeſſion in my favour from Miſs Grandiſon muſt have been very great and generous.

And will you not, before now, have expected that I ſhould have brought you acquainted with the perſons of Lord and Lady L. as I am accuſtomed to give you deſcriptions of every one to whom I am introduced?

To be ſure we have, ſay you.

Well, but my mind has not always been in tune to gratify you. And, upon my word, I am ſo much humbled with one thing, and another, that I have loſt all that pertneſs, I think, which uſed to give ſuch a livelineſs to my heart, and alertneſs to my pen, as made the writing taſk pleaſant to me, becauſe I knew that you all condeſcended to like the flippant airs of your Harriet.

Lady L. is a year older than Sir Charles: But has that true female ſoftneſs and delicacy in her features, which make her perfectly lovely; and ſhe looks to be two or three years younger than ſhe is. She is tall and ſlender; and enjoys the bleſſings of health and ſpirits in a high degree. There is ſomething of more dignity and ſprightlineſs in the air and features of Miſs Grandiſon,

Grandiſon, than in thoſe of Lady L.: But there is in thoſe of the latter, ſo much ſweetneſs and complacency, that you are not ſo much afraid of her as you are of her Siſter. The one you are ſure to love at firſt ſight: The other you will be ready to aſk leave to let you love her; and to be ready to promiſe that you will, if ſhe will ſpare you: And yet, whether ſhe will or not, you cannot help it.

Lady L. is ſuch a wife, I imagine, as a good woman ſhould wiſh to be thought. The behaviour of my Lord to her, and of her to my Lord, is free, yet reſpectful; and affectionate, but not apiſhly fond. One ſees their Love for each other in their eyes. All Love-matches are not happy: This was a match of Love; and does honour to it. Every-body ſpeaks of Lady L. with equal affection and reſpect, as a diſcreet and prudent woman. Miſs Grandiſon, by her livelier manner, is not ſo well underſtood in thoſe lights as ſhe ought to be; and, ſatisfied with the worthineſs of her own heart, is above giving herſelf concern about what the world thinks of it.

Lord L. is not handſome; but he is very agreeable. He has the look of an honeſt good man; and of a man of underſtanding. And he is what he looks to be. He is genteel, and has the air of a true Britiſh nobleman; one of thoſe, I imagine, that would have been reſpected by his appearance and manners, in the pureſt times, a hundred or two years (or how long?) ago.

I am to have the family-hiſtory of this Lord and Lady, on both ſides, and of their Loves, their difficulties, and of the obligations they talk of being under to their Brother, to whom both my Lord and Lady behave with love that carries the heart in every word, in every look.

What, my dear, ſhall we ſay to this Brother? Does he lay every-body that knows him under obligation? And is there no way to be even with him in any one thing? I long to have ſome intimate converſation with

Miſs Grandiſon, by which I ſhall perhaps find out the art he has of making every-body proud of acknowleging an inferiority to him.

I almoſt wiſh I could, while I ſtay in town, devote half my time to this amiable family; without breaking in upon them ſo much as to be thought impertinent. The other half ought to be with my kind Couſin Reeves's. I never ſhall make them amends for the trouble I have given them.

How I long for Wedneſday, to ſee all the family of the Grandiſon's—They are all to be there—On ſeveral accounts I long for that day: Yet this Sir Hargrave—

I have written, my dear, as uſual, very unreſervedly. I know that I lie more open than ever to my Uncle's obſervations. But if he will not allow for weakneſs of heart, of head, and for having been frighted out of my wits and cruelly uſed; and for further apprehenſions; and for the ſenſe I have of obligations that never can be returned; why then I muſt lie wholly at his mercy—But if he ſhould find *me* to be ever ſo ſilly a creature, I hope he will not make his particular concluſions general in diſfavour of the Sex.

Adieu, my dear Lucy!—And in you, adieu all the dear and revered friends, benefactors, lovers, of

Your HARRIET BYRON!

LETTER XL.

Mrs SELBY, *To Miſs* HARRIET BYRON.

My deareſt Harriet, *Selby-houſe, Feb.* 25.

ALTHO' we have long ago taken a reſolution, never to dictate to your choice; yet we could not excuſe ourſelves, if we did not acquaint you with any propoſal that is made to us, on your account, that you might encourage it, or otherwiſe, as you thought fit.

The dowager Lady D. wrote me a Letter ſometime ago (as you will ſee by the date): But inſiſted, that I ſhould

ſhould keep the contents a ſecret in my own boſom, till ſhe gave me leave to reveal it. She has now given me that leave, and requeſted that I will propoſe the matter to you. I have ſince ſhewn what has paſſed between her Ladyſhip and me, to your Grandmamma, Mr. Selby, and Lucy. They are all ſilent upon it; for the ſame reaſons, that I give you not my opinion; that is to ſay, till you aſk it.

But do we not ſee, my deareſt child, that ſomething has happened, within a very few days paſt, that muſt diſtance the hope of every one of your admirers, as they come to be acquainted with the circumſtances and ſituation you are now in? My dear love, you will never be able to reſiſt the impulſes of that gratitude which always opened and expanded your worthy heart.

Your Uncle's tenderneſs for you, on ſuch a proſpect, has made him ſuppreſs his inclination to rally you. He profeſſes to pity you, my dear. While, ſays he, the ſweet girl was vaunting herſelf, and refuſing this man; and diſmiſſing that; and imagining herſelf out of the reach of the deity, to which, ſooner or later, all women bow; I ſpared her not: But now, that I ſee ſhe is likely to be over head and ears in the paſſion, and has ſo much to be ſaid for her excuſe if ſhe is caught; and as our ſide muſt perhaps be the hoping ſide, the gentleman's the triumphant; I pity her too much for what *may* be the caſe, to teaze her with my animadverſions; eſpecially after what ſhe has ſuffered from the vile Sir Hargrave.

By ſeveral hints in your Letters, it is impoſſible, my dear, that we *can* be aforehand with your inclinations. Young women in a beginning Love are always willing to conceal themſelves from themſelves; they are deſirous to ſmother the fire, before they will call out for help, till it blazes, and frequently becomes too powerful to be extinguiſhed by *any* help. They will call the paſſion by another name; as, *gratitude*, ſuppoſe: But, my Harriet, gratitude ſo properly founded as yours

is, can be but another name for *Love*. The object ſo worthy, your own heart ſo worthy, conſent of minds muſt bring it to Love on one ſide; perhaps on both, if the half-ſcore of Ladies you have heard of are all of them but *mere moderns*. But that, my dear, is not to be ſuppoſed; ſince worthy hearts find out, and aſſimilate with, each other. Indeed, thoſe Ladies may be ſuch as are captivated with outward figure. A handſome man need not to have the great qualities of a Sir Charles Grandiſon, to engage the hearts of the generality of our Sex. But a good man and a handſome man, if he has the vivacity that diſtinguiſhes Sir Charles, may marry whom he pleaſes. If we women love a handſome man, for the ſake of our eye, we muſt be poor creatures indeed, if we love not good men, for the ſake of our hearts.

What makes us apprehenſive for you my Harriet, is this: That we every one of us are in love ourſelves with this fine young gentleman. Your Uncle has fallen in with Mr. Dawſon, an attorney of Nottingham, who acts for Sir Charles in ſome of his affairs; and gives him ſuch a character, reſpecting his goodneſs to his tenants and dependents *only*, as will render credible all that even the fondeſt Love, and warmeſt gratitude, can ſay in his praiſe.

We can hardly tell ſometimes how to regret (tho' your accounts of your ſufferings and danger cut us to the heart as we read them) the baſe attempt of Sir Hargrave: Were all to end as we wiſh, we ſhould not regret it: But that, my Harriet, is our fear. What will become of me, ſaid your Grandmamma, if, at laſt, the darling of my heart ſhould be entangled in a hopeleſs paſſion?

If this is likely to be the caſe, while the fire I ſpoke of is but ſmothering, and while but here and there a ſpark eſcapes your ſtruggling efforts to keep it down, reſolve, my dear, to throw cold water on it, and quench it quite. And how is this to be done, but

by

by changing your perſonal friendſhip with the amiable family, into a correſpondence by pen and ink, and returning to our longing arms, before the flame gets a-head?

When you are with us, you may either give hope to the worthy Orme, or encourage the propoſal I incloſe, as you pleaſe.

As you are not capable of the mean pride of ſeeing a number of men in your train, and have always been uneaſy at the perſeverance of Mr. Fenwick and Mr. Greville—As you have ſuffered ſo much from the natural goodneſs of your heart, on the urgency of that honeſt man Sir Rowland Meredith in his nephew's favour; and ſtill more from the baſeneſs of that wicked Sir Hargrave—As your good character, and lovely perſon, engage you more and more admirers—And, laſtly, As it would be the higheſt comfort that your Grandmamma and your Uncle, and I, and all your friends and well-wiſhers, could know, to ſee you happily married—We cannot but wiſh for this pleaſure and ſatisfaction: The ſooner you give it to us, the better.

But could there be any hope—You know what I mean—A royal diadem, my dear, would be a deſpicable thing in the compariſon.

Adieu, my beſt love. You are called upon, in my opinion, to a greater trial than ever yet you knew, of that prudence for which you have hitherto been ſo much applauded by every one, and particularly by

Your truly maternal

MARIANNA SELBY.

LETTER XLI.

From the Counteſs Dowager of D. *To Mrs.* SELBY.

[*Incloſed in the preceding*]

Jan. 23.

GIVE me leave, madam, to addreſs myſelf to you, tho' perſonally unknown, on a very particular occaſion;

occaſion; and, at the ſame time, to beg of you to keep ſecret, even from Mr. Selby, and the party to be named as ſtill *more* immediately concerned in the ſubject, till I give my conſent; as no one creature of my family, not even my Son, does, or ſhall know from me till you approve of it.

My Lord has juſt entered into his twenty-fifth year. There are not many better young men among the nobility. His minority gave an opportunity to me, and his other truſtees, to put him in poſſeſſion, when he came of age, of a very noble and clear eſtate; which he has not impaired. His perſon is not to be found fault with. He has learning, and is allowed to have good ſenſe, which every *learned* man has not. His conduct, his diſcretion, in his travels, procured him reſpect and reputation abroad. You may make enquiry privately of all theſe matters.

We are, you muſt believe, very ſolicitous to have him happily married. He is far from being an undutiful Son. Indeed he was *always* dutiful. A dutiful Son gives very promiſing hopes of making a good huſband. He aſſures me that his affections are diſengaged, and that he will pay the moſt particular regard to my recommendation.

I have caſt about for a ſuitable wife for him. I look farther than to the *perſon* of a woman; tho' my Lord will by no means have beauty left out in the qualifications of a wife. I look to the family to whom a Lady owes her education and training-up. Quality, however, I ſtand not upon. A man of quality, you know, confers quality on his wife. An ancient and good gentleman's family is all I am ſolicitous about in this reſpect. In this light, yours, madam, on all ſides, and for many deſcents, is unexceptionable. I have a deſire, if all things ſhall be found to be mutually agreeable, to be related to it: And your character, as the young Lady has been brought up under your eye, is a great inducement with me.

Your Niece Byron's beauty, and merits, as well as ſweetneſs of temper, are talked of by every-body. Not a day paſſes, but we hear of her to her great advantage. Now, madam, will you be pleaſed to anſwer me one queſtion, with that explicitneſs which the importance of the caſe, and my own intended explicitneſs to you, may require from woman to woman? Eſpecially, as I aſk it of you in confidence.

Are then Miſs Byron's affections abſolutely diſengaged? We are very nice, and muſt not doubt in this matter.

This is the only queſtion I will aſk at preſent. If this can be anſwered as I wiſh, others, in a treaty of this important nature, will come into conſideration on both ſides.

The favour of a line, as ſoon as it will ſuit your convenience, will oblige, madam,

Your moſt faithful and obedient Servant,

M. D.

LETTER XLII.

Mrs. SELBY, *To the Counteſs Dowager of* D.

Madam, *Jan.* 27.

I AM greatly obliged to your Ladyſhip for your good opinion of me, and for the honour you do me, and all our family, in the propoſed alliance.

I will anſwer your Ladyſhip's queſtion with the requiſite explicitneſs.

Mr. Greville, Mr. Orme, and Mr. Fenwick, all of this county, have reſpectively made application to us for our intereſt, and to Miſs Byron for her favour: But hitherto without effect; tho' the terms each propoſes might intitle him to conſideration.

Miſs Byron profeſſes to honour the married ſtate, and one day propoſes to make ſome man happy in it, if it be not his own fault: But declares, that ſhe has not

not yet ſeen the man to whom with her hand ſhe can give her heart.

In truth, madam, we are all neutrals on this occaſion. We have the higheſt opinion of her diſcretion. She has read, ſhe has converſed; and yet there is not in the county one who would make a more prudent manager in a family. We are all fond of her even to doting. Were ſhe not our child, we ſhould love her for her good qualities, and ſweetneſs of manners, and a frankneſs that has few examples among young women.

Permit me, madam, to add one thing; about which Miſs Byron, in her turn, will be very nice. Your Ladyſhip is pleaſed to ſay, that my Lord's affections are diſengaged. Were his Lordſhip a prince, and hoped to ſucceed with her, they muſt not be ſo, after he had ſeen and converſed with her. Yet the future happineſs, and not pride, would be the conſideration with her; for ſhe has that diffidence in her own merits, from which the worthy of both ſexes cannot be totally free. This diffidence would increaſe too much for her happineſs, were ſhe to be thought of with indifference by any man on earth, who hoped to be more than indifferent to *her*.

As to other queſtions, which, as this is anſwered, your Ladyſhip thinks may come to be aſked. I chooſe *un*-aſked (having no reſerves) to acquaint your Ladyſhip that Miſs Byron has not, in her own power, quite 15,000l. She has, it is true, reverſionary expectations: But we none of us wiſh that they ſhould for many years take place; ſince that muſt be by the death of Mrs Shirley, her Grandmother, who is equally revered and beloved by all that know her; and whoſe life is bound up in the happineſs of her Grand-daughter.

I will ſtrictly obey your Ladyſhip in the ſecrecy enjoined; and am, madam,

Your Ladyſhip's obliged and faithful humble Servant,

MARIANNA SELBY.

LETTER XLIII.

From the Counteſs Dowager of D. *To Mrs.* SELBY.

Feb. 23.

I SHOULD ſooner have anſwered yours, had I not waited for the return of my Son, who had taken a little journey into Wales, to look into the condition of a ſmall eſtate he has there, which he finds capable of great improvement; and about which he has given proper orders.

I took the firſt opportunity to queſtion him in relation to his inclinations to marriage, and whether he had a regard to any particular woman: And having received an anſwer to my wiſhes, I mentioned Miſs Byron to him, as a young Lady that I ſhould think, from the general good character ſhe bore, would make him an excellent wife.

He ſaid, he had heard her much talked of, and always to her advantage. I then ſhewed him, as in confidence, my letter, and your anſwer. There can be, ſaid I, (on purpoſe to try him) but one objection on your part; and that is fortune: 15,000l. to a nobleman, who is poſſeſſed of 12,000l. a year, and has been offered four times the portion, may be thought very inadequate. The leſs to be ſtood upon, replied he, where the fortune on my ſide is ſo conſiderable. The very anſwer, my dear Mrs. Selby, that I wiſhed him to make.

I aſked him, if I ſhould begin a formal treaty with you, upon what he ſaid. He anſwered, that he had heard from every mouth, ſo much ſaid in praiſe of Miſs Byron's mind, as well as perſon, that he deſired I would; and that I would directly endeavour to obtain leave for him to viſit the young Lady.

I propoſe it accordingly. I underſtand, that ſhe is at preſent in London. I leave it to your choice, ma-

dam,

dam, and Mrs. Shirley's, and Mr. Selby's (to whom now, as alſo to Miſs Byron, you will be ſo good as to communicate the affair) whether you will ſend for her down to receive my Lord's viſit and mine; or whether we ſhall wait on her in town.

I propoſe very high ſatisfaction to myſelf, if the young people approve of each other, in an alliance ſo much to my wiſhes in every reſpect. I ſhall love the Counteſs of D. as well as any of you can do Miſs Byron: And as ſhe has not at preſent a Mother, I ſhall with pleaſure ſupply that tender relation to her, for the ſake of ſo many engaging qualities, as common fame, as well as good Mrs. Selby, ſays ſhe is miſtreſs of.

You will diſpatch an anſwer as to the interview. I am impatient for it. I depend much upon the frankneſs of the young Lady, which you make a part of her agreeable character. And am, madam,

Your affectionate and faithful humble Servant,

M. D.

LETTER XLIV.

Miſs BYRON, *To Mrs.* SELBY.

London, Feb. 28.

INDEED, my dear and ever indulgent Aunt Selby, you have given me pain; and yet I am very ungrateful, I believe, to ſay ſo: But if I feel the pain (tho' perhaps I ought not) ſhould I not own it?

What *circumſtances*, what *ſituation*, am I in, madam, that I cannot be miſtreſs of myſelf? That ſhall turn my Uncle's half-feared, tho' always agreeable, raillery into *pity* for me?

"Over head and ears in the paſſion"—"I to be "on the hoping ſide; the gentleman on the triumphant"—"It is impoſſible for you my friends to be "aforehand with my inclinations"—"A beginning

"Love

"Love to be mentioned, in which one is willing to "conceal one's ſelf from one's ſelf!" *Fires*, *Flames*, *Blazes*, to follow!—*Gratitude* and *Love* to be ſpoken of as ſynonymous terms—Ah! my dear Aunt, how could you let my Uncle write ſuch a Letter, and then copy it, and ſend it to me as yours?

And yet ſome very tender ſtrokes are in it, that no *man*, that hardly any-body but you among *women*, could write.

But what do you *do*, madam, when you tell your Harriet of your own prepoſſeſſions in favour of a man who, as you thought, had before in my eye too many advantages? Indeed you ſhould have taken care not to let me know, that his great qualities had impreſſed you all ſo deeply: And my Grandmamma to be ſo *very* apprehenſive too for the *entangled girl!*

Hopeleſs paſſion, ſaid ſhe? *Entangled in a hopeleſs paſſion!* O let me die before this ſhall be deſerved to be ſaid of your Harriet!

Then again riſes to your pen, *ſmothering* and *eſcaped ſparks*; and I am deſired to hurry myſelf to get *cold water* to quench the *flame*—Dear, dear madam, what images are here? And applied—To whom?—And by whom?—Have I written any-thing ſo *very* blazing!—Surely I have not. But you ſhould not ſay you will all forgive me, If this be my ſad ſituation. You ſhould not ſay, How much you are *yourſelves*, *all of you*, in love with this excellent man; and talk of Mr. Dawſon, and of what he ſays of him: But you ſhould have told me, that if I ſuffer my gratitude to grow into Love, you will never forgive me; then ſhould I have had a call of duty to check or controul a paſſion, that you were afraid could not be gratified.

Well, and there is no way left for me, it ſeems, but to fly for it! To hurry away to Northamptonſhire, and either to begin a new treaty with Lord D. or to give hope to an old Lover. Poor Harriet Byron! And is it indeed ſo bad with thee? And does thy Aunt Selby think it is?

But is there no hope, that the man will take *pity* of thee? When he ſees thee ſo ſadly *entangled*, will he not vouchſafe to lend an extricating hand?

Oh, no—Too much obliged, as thou already art, how canſt thou expect to be farther obliged? Obliged in the higheſt degree?

But let me try if I cannot play round this bright, this beamy taper, without ſingeing my wings! I fanſy it is not yet *quite* ſo bad with me! At leaſt, let me ſtand this one viſit of to-morrow: And then if I find reaſon to think I cannot ſtand it, I will take the kind advice, and fly for it; rather than add another hopeleſs girl to the half-ſcore that perhaps have been long ſighing for this beſt of men.

But even then, my Aunt, that is to ſay, were I to fly, and take ſhelter under your protecting wings, I ſhall not, I hope, think it *abſolutely* neceſſary to light up one flame, in order to extinguiſh another. I ſhall always value Mr. Orme as a friend; but indeed I am leſs than ever inclined to think of him in a nearer light.

As to Lady D.'s propoſal, it admits not with me of half a thought. You know my deareſt Aunt, that I am not yet *rejected* by one with whom you are all in love—But this *ſeriouſly* I will own (and yet I hope nothing but my gratitude is engaged, and that indeed is a very powerful tie) that ſince I have ſeen and known Sir Charles Grandiſon, I have not only (as before) an *indifference*, but a *diſlike*, to all other men. And I think, if I know my own heart, I had rather converſe but an hour in a week with him, and with Miſs Grandiſon, than be the wife of any man I have ever ſeen or known.

If this ſhould end at laſt in Love, and if I ſhould be *entangled in a hopeleſs paſſion*, the object of it would be Sir Charles Grandiſon: He could not inſult me; and mean, as the word *pity* in ſome caſes ſounds, I had rather have his pity, than the Love of any other man.

You

You will, upon the ſtrength of what I have ſaid, be ſo good, dear madam, as to let the Counteſs of D. know, that I think myſelf highly obliged to her, for her favourable opinion of me: That ſhe has by it intereſted all my good wiſhes in her Son's happineſs; and that I was always of opinion, that equality of fortune and degree, tho' not abſolutely neceſſary to matrimonial felicity, was however a circumſtance not to be ſlighted: But you, madam, can put my meaning in better, in fitter words, when you are aſſured, that it *is* my meaning, to give an abſolute, tho' grateful, negative to this propoſal. And I do aſſure you that ſuch *is* my meaning; and that I ſhould deſpiſe myſelf, were I capable of keeping one man in ſuſpenſe, even had I hope of *your* hope, while I was balancing in favour of another.

I believe, madam, I have been a little petulant, and very ſaucy, in what I have written: But my heart is not at eaſe: And I am vexed with theſe men, one after another, when Sir Hargrave has given me a ſurfeit of them; and only that the bad has brought me into the knowlege of the beſt, or I could reſolve never more to hear a man talk to me, no not for one moment, upon a ſubject, that is become ſo juſtly painful to one who never took pleaſure in their airy adulation.

I know you will, with your uſual goodneſs, and ſo will my Grandmamma, and ſo will my Uncle Selby, pardon all the imperfections of, deareſt madam,

Your and Their ever dutiful

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XLV.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Tueſday Evening, Feb. 28.

MR. Reeves, my dear, is juſt returned from a viſit he made to St. James's Square. I tranſcribe a paper

But is there no hope, that the man will take *pity* of thee? When he ſees thee ſo ſadly *entangled*, will he not vouchſafe to lend an extricating hand?

Oh, no—Too much obliged, as thou already art, how canſt thou expect to be farther obliged? Obliged in the higheſt degree?

But let me try if I cannot play round this bright, this beamy taper, without ſingeing my wings! I fanſy it is not yet *quite* ſo bad with me! At leaſt, let me ſtand this one viſit of to-morrow: And then if I find reaſon to think I cannot ſtand it, I will take the kind advice, and fly for it; rather than add another hopeleſs girl to the half-ſcore that perhaps have been long ſighing for this beſt of men.

But even then, my Aunt, that is to ſay, were I to fly, and take ſhelter under your protecting wings, I ſhall not, I hope, think it *abſolutely* neceſſary to light up one flame, in order to extinguiſh another. I ſhall always value Mr. Orme as a friend; but indeed I am leſs than ever inclined to think of him in a nearer light.

As to Lady D.'s propoſal, it admits not with me of half a thought. You know my deareſt Aunt, that I am not yet *rejected* by one with whom you are all in love—But this *ſeriouſly* I will own (and yet I hope nothing but my gratitude is engaged, and that indeed is a very powerful tie) that ſince I have ſeen and known Sir Charles Grandiſon, I have not only (as before) an *indifference*, but a *diſlike*, to all other men. And I think, if I know my own heart, I had rather converſe but an hour in a week with him, and with Miſs Grandiſon, than be the wife of any man I have ever ſeen or known.

If this ſhould end at laſt in Love, and if I ſhould be *entangled in a hopeleſs paſſion*, the object of it would be Sir Charles Grandiſon: He could not inſult me; and mean, as the word *pity* in ſome caſes ſounds, I had rather have his pity, than the Love of any other man.

You

You will, upon the ſtrength of what I have ſaid, be ſo good, dear madam, as to let the Counteſs of D. know, that I think myſelf highly obliged to her, for her favourable opinion of me: That ſhe has by it intereſted all my good wiſhes in her Son's happineſs; and that I was always of opinion, that equality of fortune and degree, tho' not abſolutely neceſſary to matrimonial felicity, was however a circumſtance not to be ſlighted: But you, madam, can put my meaning in better, in fitter words, when you are aſſured, that it *is* my meaning, to give an abſolute, tho' grateful, negative to this propoſal. And I do aſſure you that ſuch *is* my meaning; and that I ſhould deſpiſe myſelf, were I capable of keeping one man in ſuſpenſe, even had I hope of *your* hope, while I was balancing in favour of another.

I believe, madam, I have been a little petulant, and very ſaucy, in what I have written: But my heart is not at eaſe: And I am vexed with theſe men, one after another, when Sir Hargrave has given me a ſurfeit of them; and only that the bad has brought me into the knowlege of the beſt, or I could reſolve never more to hear a man talk to me, no not for one moment, upon a ſubject, that is become ſo juſtly painful to one who never took pleaſure in their airy adulation.

I know you will, with your uſual goodneſs, and ſo will my Grandmamma, and ſo will my Uncle Selby, pardon all the imperfections of, deareſt madam,

Your and Their ever dutiful

HARRIET BYRON.

LETTER XLV.

Miſs BYRON, *To Miſs* SELBY.

Tueſday Evening, Feb. 28.

MR. Reeves, my dear, is juſt returned from a viſit he made to St. James's Square. I tranſcribe a paper

paper giving an account of what paſſed between Mr. Bagenhall and Sir Charles in relation to the ſhocking affair which has filled me with ſo much apprehenſion; and which Sir Charles, at my Couſin's requeſt, allowed him to put in his pocket.

Mr. Bagenhall came to Sir Charles yeſterday evening with a meſſage from Sir Hargrave, demanding a meeting with him, the next morning, at a particular hour, at Kenſington Gravel-pits. Sir Charles took Mr Bagenhall with him into his ſtudy; and, aſking him to ſit down, Mr. Bagenhall ſaid, That he was once concerned in an affair of this nature, which had been very much miſrepreſented afterwards; and that he had been adviſed to take a ſtep which Sir Charles might think extraordinary; which was, that he had brought with him a young gentleman, whom he hoped, for Sir Hargrave's ſatisfaction, as well as to do juſtice to what ſhould paſs between them, Sir Charles would permit to take minutes of their converſation: And that he was in the Hall.

Let not a gentleman be left in the Hall, ſaid Sir Charles; and, ringing, directed him to be ſhewn into the ſtudy to them. Yet, Mr. Bagenhall, ſaid he, I ſee no occaſion for this. Our converſation on the ſubject you come to talk of, *can* be but ſhort.

Were it to hold but two minutes, Sir Charles.

What you pleaſe, Mr. Bagenhall.

The young gentleman entered; and pen and ink were ſet before him. He wrote in ſhort hand: And read it to the gentleman; and Sir Charles, as it was to be tranſcribed for Sir Hargrave, deſiring a copy of it, it was ſent him the ſame night.

A Conference between Sir Charles Grandiſon, *Bart. and* James Bagenhall, *Eſq.*

Sir Ch. You have told me, Mr. Bagenhall, Sir Hargrave's demand. Have you ſeen, Sir, the anſwer I returned to his Letter?

Mr. Bagenhall. I have, Sir. *Sir*

Sir Ch. And do you think, there needs any other, or further?

Mr. B. It is not, Sir Charles, ſuch an anſwer as a gentleman can ſit down with.

Sir Ch. Do you give that as *your own* opinion, Mr. Bagenhall? Or, as Sir Hargrave's?

Mr. B. As Sir Hargrave's, Sir. And I believe it would be the opinion of every man of honour.

Sir Ch. Man of honour! Mr. Bagenhall. A man of honour would not have given the occaſion which has brought you and me, Sir, into a perſonal knowlege of each other. I aſked the queſtion, ſuppoſing there could be but *one* principal in this debate.

Mr. B. I beg pardon: I meant not that there ſhould be *two*.

Sir Ch. Pray, Sir, let me aſk you, Do you know the particulars of Sir Hargrave's attempt, and of his violence to the Lady?

Mr. B. Sir Hargrave, I believe, has given me a very exact account of every-thing. He meant not diſhonour to the Lady:

Sir Ch. He muſt have a very high opinion of himſelf, if he thought the *beſt* he could do for her, would be to do her honour.—Sir, pray put that down.—Repeating what he ſaid to the writer, that he might not miſtake.

Sir Ch. But do you, Mr. Bagenhall, think Sir Hargrave was juſtifiable, as a man of honour, in what he did?

Mr. B. I mean not, as I told you, Sir Charles, to make myſelf a principal in this affair. I pretend not to juſtify what Sir Hargrave did to the Lady.

Sir Ch. I hope then you will allow me to refer to my anſwer to Sir Hargrave's Letter. I ſhall ſend him no other. I beg your pardon, Mr. Bagenhall, I mean not a diſreſpect to you.

Mr. B. No *other*, Sir Charles?

Sir Ch. Since he is to ſee what this gentleman writes, pray

pray put down, Sir, that I ſay, The anſwer I have written, is ſuch a one as he ought to be ſatisfied with: Such a one as becomes a man of honour to ſend, if he thought fit to ſend *any*: And ſuch a one as a man, who has acted as Sir Hargrave acted by a woman of virtue and honour, ought to be thankful for.—Have you written that, Sir?

Writer. I have, Sir.

Sir Ch. Write further, if you pleaſe; That I ſay Sir Hargrave may be very glad, if he hear no more of this affair from the Lady's natural friends: That, however, I ſhall rid him of all apprehenſions of that nature; for that I ſtill conſider the Lady as under my protection, with regard to any conſequences that may naturally follow what happened on Hounſlow-heath; That I ſay, I ſhall neglect no proper call to protect her farther; but that his call upon me to meet him, muſt be ſuch a one as my own heart can juſtify; and that it is not my way to obey the inſolent ſummons of any man breathing.—And yet, what is this, Mr. Bagenhall, but repeating what I wrote?

Mr. B. You are warm, Sir Charles.

Sir Ch. Indeed I am not: I am only earneſt. As Sir Hargrave is to be ſhewn what paſſes. I ſay more than otherwiſe I ſhould chooſe to ſay

Mr. B. Will you name your own time and place, Sir Charles?

Sir Ch. To do what?

Mr B. To meet Sir Hargrave.

Sir Ch. To do him good—To do good to my bittereſt enemy, I would meet him. Let him know, that I wrote a very long Letter, becauſe I would diſcharge my mind of all that I thought neceſſary to ſay on the occaſion.

Mr B. And you have no other anſwer to return?

Sir Ch. Only this—Let Sir Hargrave engage himſelf in a like unworthy enterprize; and let the Lady, as this did, claim my protection; and I will endeavour

to

to give it to her, altho' Sir Hargrave were ſurrounded by as many men armed, as he has in his ſervice; that is to ſay, if a legal redreſs were not at hand: If it were, I hold it not to be a point of bravery to inſult magiſtracy, and to take upon myſelf to be my own judge; and, as it might happen, another man's executioner.

Mr B. This is nobly ſaid Sir Charles: But ſtill Sir Hargrave had not injured *you*, he ſays. And as I had heard you were a man of an excellent character, and know Sir Hargrave to be a man of courage, I took it into my head, for the prevention of miſchief, to make a propoſal in writing to the Lady, whom Sir Hargrave loves as his own ſoul; and if ſhe had come into it—

Sir Ch. A ſtrange propoſal, Mr. Bagenhall. Could you expect any-thing from it?

Mr. B. Why not, Sir Charles? She is diſengaged, it ſeems. I preſume, Sir, you do not intend to make court to her yourſelf?

Sir Ch. We are inſenſibly got into a parley, upon a ſubject that will not bear it, Mr. Bagenhall. Tell Sir Hargrave—or, write it down from my lips, Sir (ſpeaking to the writer) That I wiſh him to take time to enquire after my character, and after my motives in refuſing to meet him on the terms he expects me to ſee him. Tell him, That I have, before now, ſhewn an inſolent man, that I *may be* provoked: But that, when I have been ſo, I have had the happineſs to chaſtiſe ſuch a one without murdering him, and without giving any advantage over my own life, to his ſingle arm.

Mr. B. This is great talking, Sir Charles.

Sir Ch. It is, Mr. Bagenhall. And I ſhould be ſorry to have been put upon it, were I not in hope, that it may lead Sir Hargrave to ſuch enquiries as may be for *his* ſervice as much as for *mine*.

Mr. B. I wiſh, that two ſuch ſpirits were better acquainted with each other, or that Sir Hargrave had not

ſuffered ſo much as he has done, both in perſon and mind.

Sir Ch. What does all this tend to, Mr. Bagenhall? I look upon you as a gentleman; and the more, for having ſaid, You were ſolicitous to prevent further miſchief, or I ſhould not have ſaid ſo much to ſo little purpoſe. And once more, I muſt refer to my Letter.

Mr. B. I own I admire you for your ſpirit, Sir. But it is amazing to me, that a man of ſuch ſpirit can refuſe to a gentleman the ſatisfaction which is demanded of him.

Sir Ch. It is owing to my having ſome ſpirit, that I can, fearleſs of conſequences, refuſe what you call ſatisfaction to Sir Hargrave, and yet be fearleſs of inſult upon my refuſal. I conſider myſelf as a mortal man: I can die but once: Once I muſt die: And if the cauſe be ſuch as will juſtify me to my own heart, I, *for my own ſake*, care not whether my life be demanded of me to-morrow, or forty years hence: But, Sir (ſpeaking to the writer) Let not this, that I have now ſaid, be tranſcribed from your notes: It may to Sir Hargrave ſound oſtentatiouſly. I want not, that anything ſhould be read or ſhewn to him, that would appear like giving conſequence to myſelf, except for Sir Hargrave's own ſake.

Mr. B I beg, that it may not be ſpared. If you are capable of acting as you ſpeak; by what I have heard *of* you in the affair on Hounſlow-heath; and by what I have heard *from* you in this converſation; and *ſee* of you; I think you a wonder of a man and ſhould be glad it were in my power to reconcile you to each other.

Sir Ch. I could not hold friendſhip, Mr. Bagenhall, with a man that has been capable of acting as Sir Hargrave has acted, by an innocent and helpleſs young Lady. But I will name the terms on which I can take by the hand, where-ever I meet him, a man to whom I can have no malice: Theſe are they, That he lay at

the

the door of mad and violent paſſion the illegal attempt he made on the beſt of women: That he expreſs his ſorrow for it; and, on his knees, if he pleaſes (it is no diſgrace to the *proudeſt* man to kneel to an injured Lady) beg her pardon; and confeſs her clemency to be greater than he deſerves, if ſhe give it.

Mr. B. Good God!—Shall that be tranſcribed, Sir Charles?

Sir Ch. By all means: And if Sir Hargrave is a man that has in his heart the leaſt ſpark of true magnanimity, he will gladly embrace the opportunity of acting accordingly: And put down, Sir, That ſorrow, that contrition, is all the atonement that can be made for a perpetrated evil.

A faithful Narrative. Henry Cotes.

February 27.

DOES not your heart glow, my Lucy, now you have read (as I ſuppoſe you have) this paper? And do not the countenances of every one of my revered friends round you [Pray look!] ſhine with admiration of this excellent man? And yet you all loved him before: And ſo you think I did. Well, I can't help your thoughts!—But I hope I ſhall not be undone by a *good* man!

You will imagine, that my heart was a little agitated, when I came to read Mr. Bagenhall's queſtion, Whether Sir Charles intended to make court to me himſelf? I am ſorry to tell you, Lucy, that I was a little more affected than I wiſhed to be. Indeed, I ſhall keep a *look-out*, as you call it, upon myſelf. To ſay truth, I laid down the paper at that place, and was afraid to read the anſwer made to it. When I took it up, and read what followed, I might have ſpared, I ſaw, my fooliſh little tremors. See how frank I continue to be: But if you come not to this paragraph

grah before you are aware, you need not read it to my Uncle.

Mr. Bagenhall went away ſo much pleaſed with Sir Charles (as he owned) that Mr. Reeves encourages me to hope, ſome way may be found to prevent further miſchief. Yet the condition, which Sir Charles has propoſed for my forgiving the wretch—Upon my word, my dear, I deſire not to ſee Sir Hargrave either upon his knees, or upon his feet: I am ſure I could not ſee him without very violent emotions. His barbarity, his malice, his cruelty, have impreſſed me ſtrongly: Nor can I be glad to ſee the wretch with his diſfigured mouth and lip. His lip, it ſeems, has been ſewed up, and he wears a great black-ſilk patch upon the place.

I can't find that Sir Charles has heard from the exaſperated man, ſince Mr. Bagenhall left him yeſterday.

I hope nothing will happen to overcloud to-morrow. I propoſe to myſelf as happy a day, as, in the preſent ſituation of things, can be given to

Your HARRIET BYRON.

BRITISH 28 AU 74 MUSEUM

END OF VOL. I.